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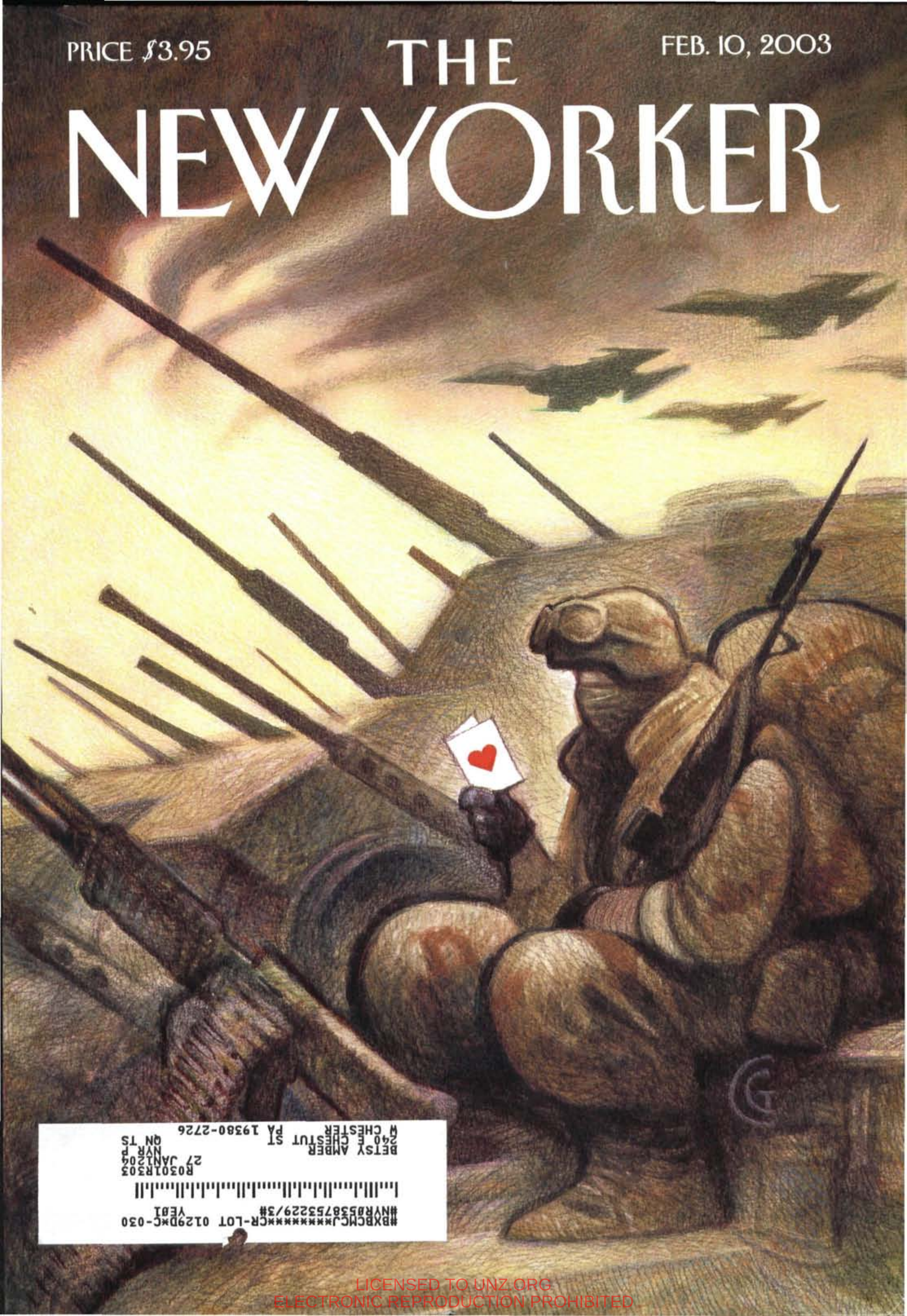

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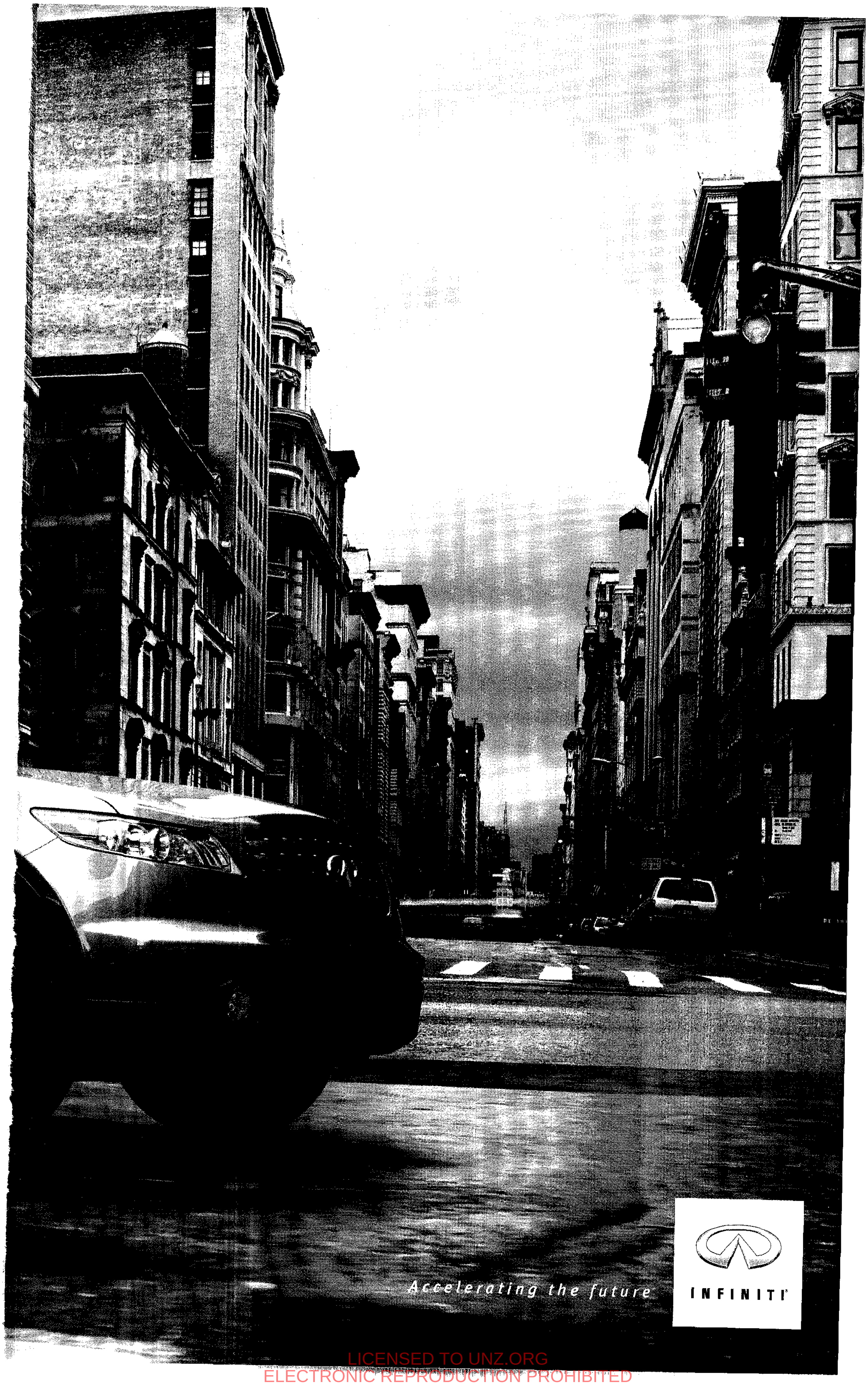
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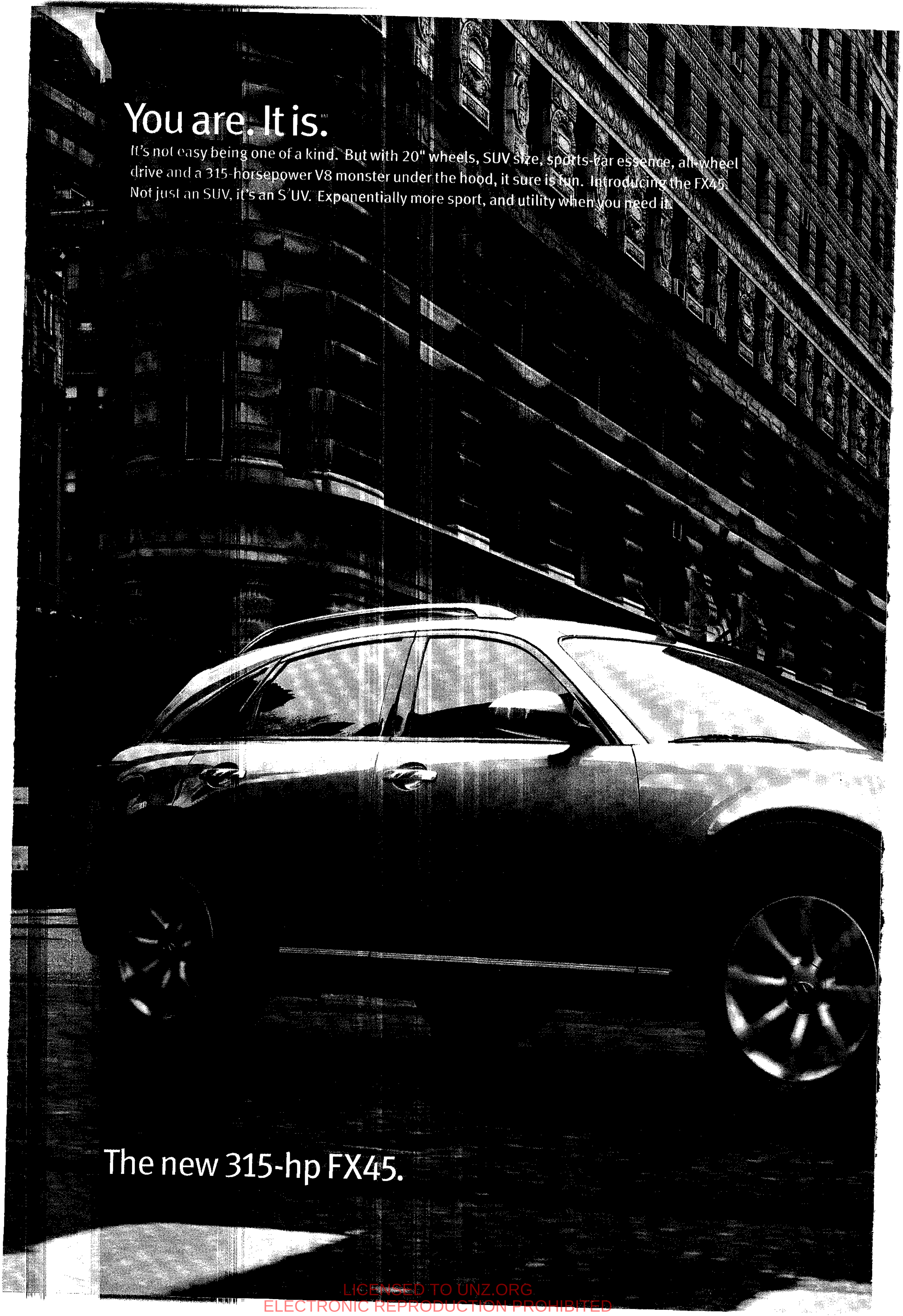

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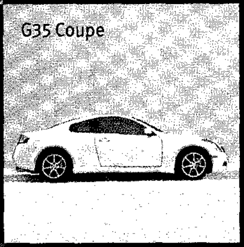

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THE NEW YORKER

FEBRUARY 10, 2003

10 GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

33 THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Bush's boasts; hanging up BUtterfield 8.

Jeffrey Goldberg 40 A REPORTER AT LARGE

The Unknown

Another look at Iraq and Al Qaeda.

Jerome Groopman 48 ANNALS OF MEDICINE

The Edmonton Protocol

The search for a cure for diabetes.

Jon Lee Anderson 58 LETTER FROM IRAN

Dreaming of Baghdad

An opposition leader waits for war.

Alma Guillermoprieto 70 PERSONAL HISTORY

Dancing in the City

Merce, Twyla, and the sixties.

Haruki Murakami 80 FICTION

"Ice Man"

THE CRITICS

Nicholas Lemann 86 A CRITIC AT LARGE

Reporting from the civil-rights era.

91 BOOKS

Briefly Noted

Nancy Franklin 92 ON TELEVISION

"Kingpin," "Dragnet."

Anthony Lane 94 ON PHOTOGRAPHY

August Sander's German portraits.

Hilton Als 100 THE THEATRE

Shakespeare's "The Winter's Tale."

David Denby 102 THE CURRENT CINEMA

A Fassbinder retrospective.

POEMS

Philip Levine 52 "A View of Home"

Maxine Kumin 72 "Jack"

Vénus Khoury-Ghata 99 "Words"

COVER *"V Day," by Carter Goodrich* THE BACK PAGE *"2003 Application for Cash Advance on Future Federal Tax Cut," by Bruce McCall* DRAWINGS *Frank Cotham, Danny Shanahan, William Haefeli, Charles Barsotti, Michael Maslin, Robert Weber, Bruce Eric Kaplan, Peter Steiner, P. C. Vey, Roz Chast, Drew Dernavich, Jack Ziegler, Mick Stevens, Matthew Diffee, Leo Cullum, Barbara Smaller, Lee Lorenz, Michael Shaw*

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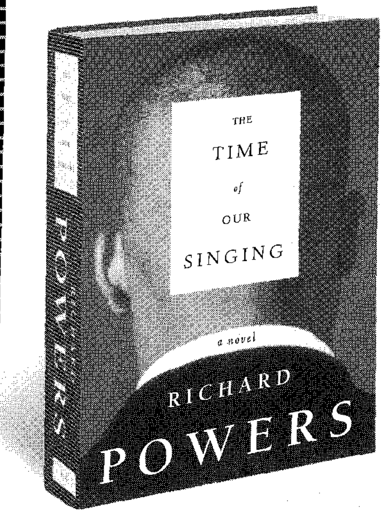

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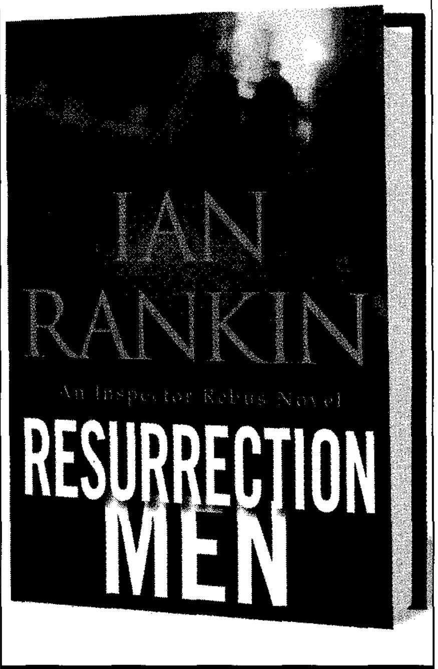

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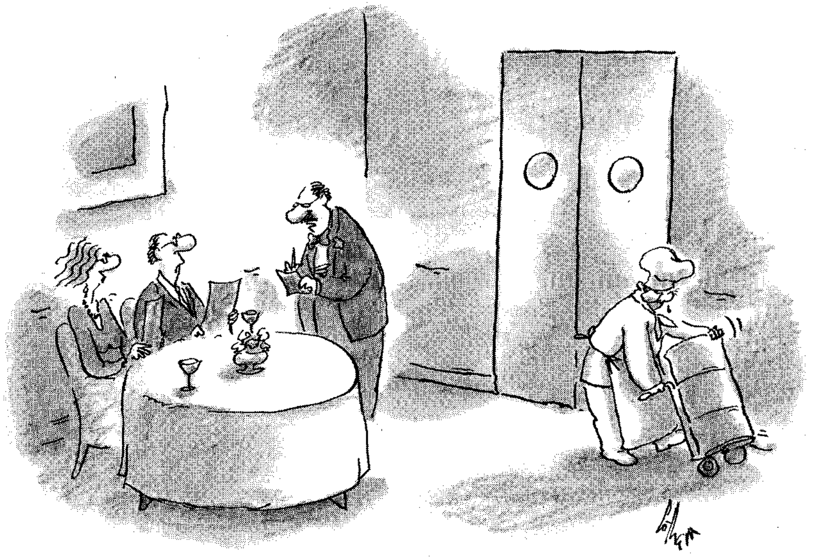

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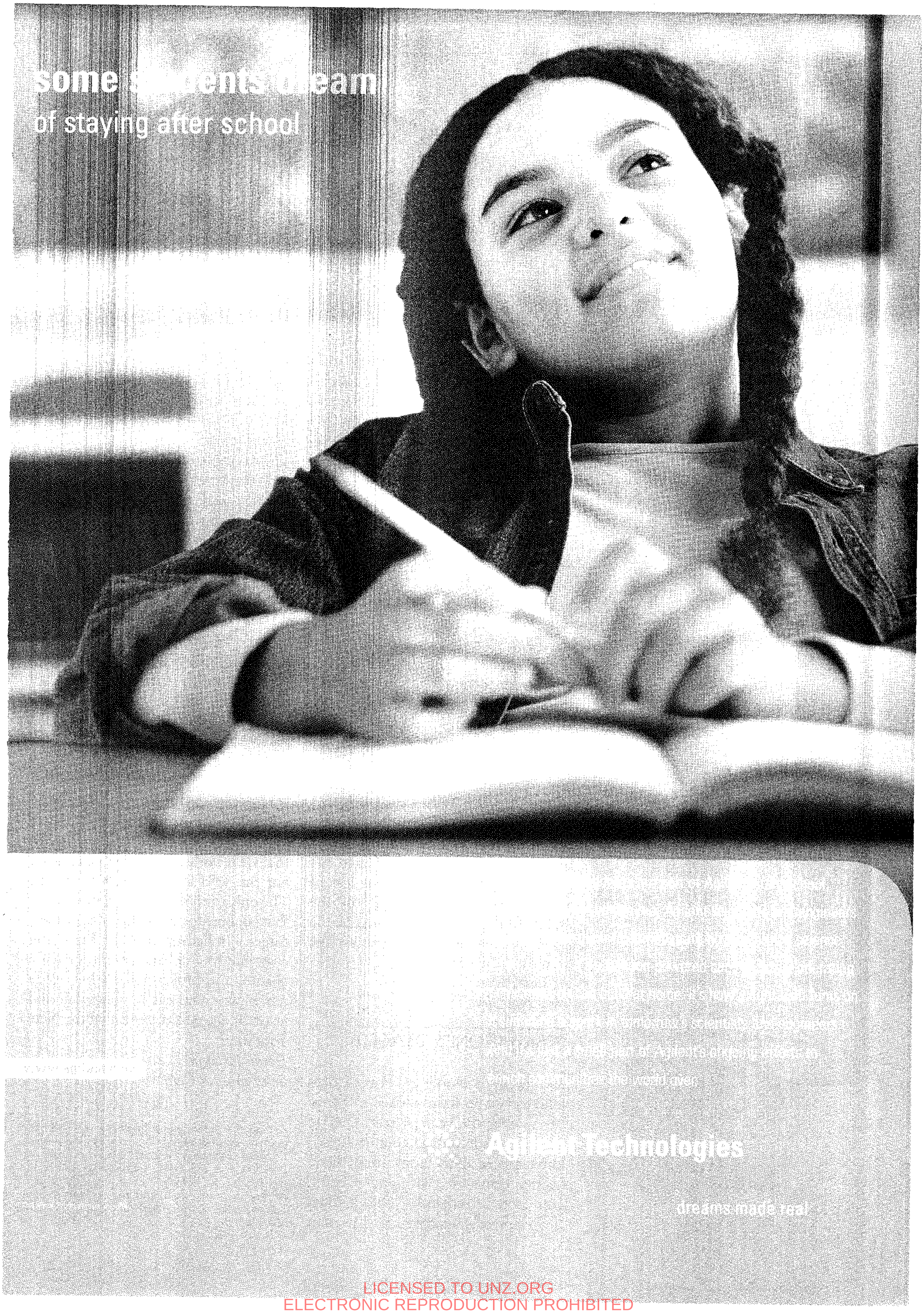
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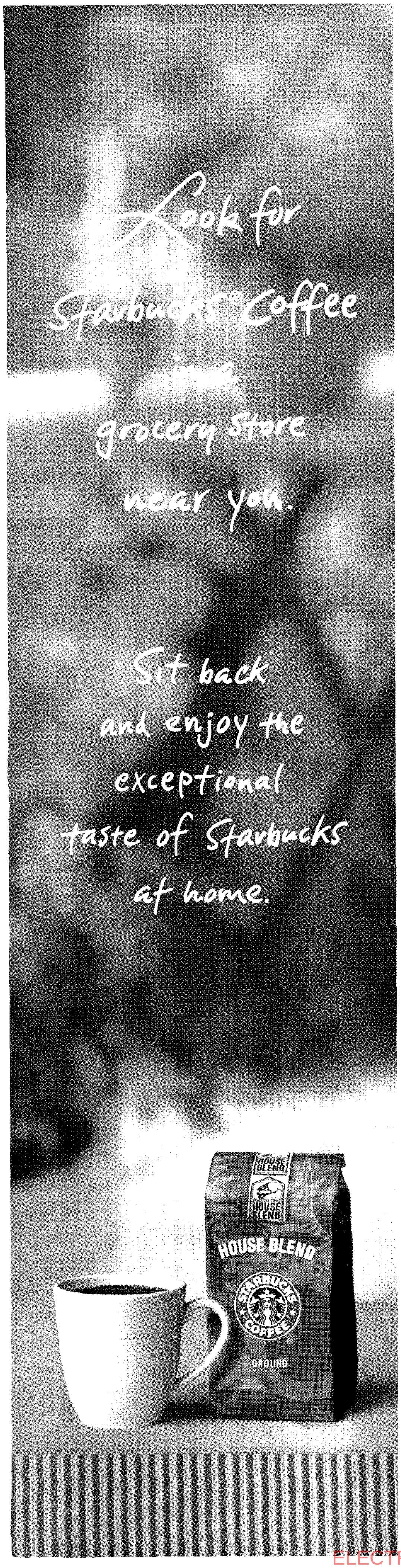
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THE DIVIDEND ON TAXES

As Hendrik Hertzberg suggests, there are several ironies at work in President Bush's proposal to end the tax on dividend income in the name of stimulating the economy (The Talk of the Town, January 20th). In the past, one argument in favor of the dividend tax was that the tax itself could serve as an economic stimulus. The logic was that people who received dividends viewed them as ordinary income and spent them in ordinary ways; the tax, by inhibiting investors' demand for these payouts, would allow companies to invest more of their funds in new equipment and enterprises—something they could do better than individuals. Thus, everybody would benefit: the corporations from additional profits, the shareholders from the resulting rise in stock price, the Treasury from the tax revenues, and the public from the impetus that all this would give to the world of business, including new jobs. The truth is that the economy will adjust to almost anything, but changes, even desirable ones, are likely to cause disruptions. Abolishing the dividend tax, for instance, could possibly have an immediate deflationary effect—which could be as dangerous, in the current circumstances, as inflation is at other times—because the monies liberated by the abolition could not be recirculated fast enough to compensate for the loss of income and cuts in spending by the states. And this outcome would be the opposite of what the President says he wants to achieve.

Aristides Vertes
New York City

SIERRA LEONE'S TRAGEDY

As one of thousands of Peace Corps volunteers who have worked in Sierra Leone over the years, I read George Packer's article on the country's child amputees—victims of atrocities in Sierra Leone's civil war—with appreciation, frustration, and anguish ("The Children of Freetown," January 13th). I lived in Freetown in the early nineteen-sixties, when Sierra Leone's future seemed so bright. I last visited soon after the outbreak of civil war in 1991, and saw skulls mounted along the roads. Packer tells the story of the handful of children who were brought to America for treatment by a group of Staten Islanders, and of the conflict over whether they should be returned to their families in Sierra Leone, as had originally been planned, or helped to start new lives here. But there are three larger questions: Who and what were responsible for that country's descent into hell? What can be done to enable Sierra Leone and its West African neighbors to develop as stable and productive societies? And whose responsibility is it to make that happen?

Kevin G. Lowther
Springfield, Va.

SAN FRANCISCO TREATS

Regarding Calvin Trillin's article on the supposed superiority of New York City to San Francisco in the area of takeout: lies, lies, lies ("Local Bounty," January 20th). I am sitting in our San Francisco apartment looking at a mountain of takeout menus—yes, we call it takeout here, too—Chinese, Japanese, Thai, Italian, Indian, you name it. We even have our groceries delivered. (It's not that we're so busy. We just can't move our car; we'd lose our parking space.) The only truth in that piece of fiction is that our burritos are perfect. But "two or three . . . rolled-up meals"? The thing costs only four dollars! To rewrap half a burrito in its broken foil, stick it in the refrigerator, and eat it, congealed and tasteless, the next day—is that the New York way?

Joanne Holland
San Francisco, Calif.

•

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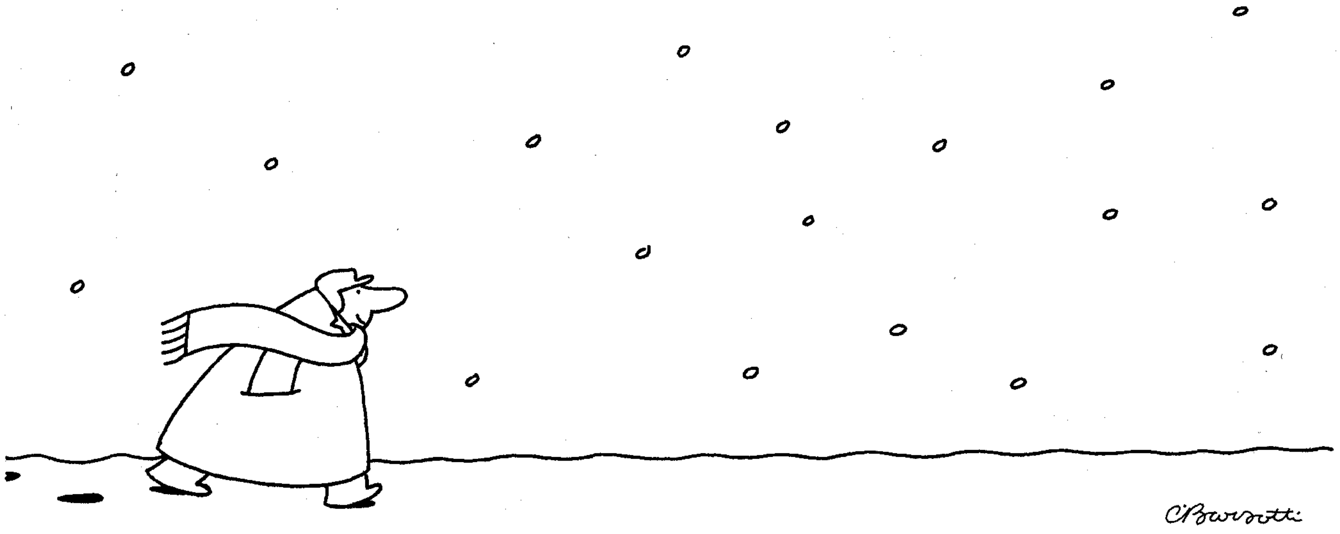

THE THEATRE

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for timetables and ticket information.

BITTER BIERCE; OR, THE FRICTION WE CALL GRIEF
Mac Wellman directs his new play about the life and work of Ambrose Bierce, the Ohio-born author of "The Devil's Dictionary," who worked as a journalist in New York and London, fought in the Civil War, and disappeared in Mexico in 1914, while tracking the exploits of Pancho Villa. Opens Feb. 6 at 7:30. (P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 10th St. 212-477-5288. Through March 2.)

THE BROTHERS KARAMAZOV, PART I
In the Eleventh Hour Theatre Company cabaret-style production of Fyodor Dostoyevsky's novel, vodka and Georgian wine will be served half an hour before curtain, and piroshki and other zakuski will also be available. Directed by Alexander Harrington. Opens Feb. 6 at 7. (The Culture Project, 45 Bleecker St. 212-352-3101. Through Feb. 23.)

DUBLIN CAROL
Conor McPherson directs his new play, which features Keith Nobbs, Jim Norton, and Kerry O'Malley. In previews. (Atlantic, 336 W. 20th St. 212-239-6200.)

FAR AND WIDE
The Mint Theatre Company's artistic director, Jonathan Bank, directs his new adaptation of Arthur Schnitzler's "Das Weite Land," a drama about a wife whose devotion oppresses her faithless husband. Schnitzler's popularity was such that the play premièred simultaneously in nine European cities when it opened, in 1911. Previews begin Feb. 7. (311 W. 43rd St. 212-315-0231.)

IT JUST CATCHES
Carol Hemingway presents a new play based on five of her famous father-in-law's short stories and accompanied by the music of Cole Porter, who, apparently, was one of Papa's cronies. Directed by Edward Hastings. Opens Feb. 9 at 7. (Cherry Lane Theatre, 38 Commerce St. 212-239-6200.)

LITTLE FISH
In a new musical by Michael John LaChiusa ("The Wild Party"), inspired by stories by Deborah Eisenberg, Jennifer Laura Thompson plays a New York woman in search of the right man. Choreographed and directed by Graciela Daniele. In previews. (Second Stage, 307 W. 43rd St., west of Eighth Ave. 212-246-4422.)

MA RAINEY'S BLACK BOTTOM
Whoopi Goldberg and Charles S. Dutton join forces in a revival of the August Wilson play. Directed by Marion McClinton. In previews. Opens Feb. 6 at 6:30. (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 212-239-6200.)

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MARK OF CAIN
A new play by the Danish playwright Morti Vizki links the tragedies of Auschwitz with the Biblical conflict between Cain and Abel. In previews. Opens Feb. 7 at 8. (78th Street Theatre, 236 W. 78th St. 212-206-1515. Through Feb. 22.)

OBSERVE THE SONS OF ULSTER MARCHING TOWARDS THE SOMME
Frank McGuinness's play stars Richard Easton, Justin Theroux, and Scott Wolf, and tells the story of a platoon of Irish Protestant volunteers who signed up for the Battle of the Somme. Directed by Nicholas Martin. Previews begin Feb. 6. (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 212-239-6200.)

REQUIEM FOR WILLIAM
Jack Cummings directs a twenty-six-member cast in a Transport Group production that ties together seven short plays by William Inge, including "To Boblink, for Her Spirit," "The Rainy Afternoon," and "A Social Event." In previews. Opens Feb. 8 at 8. (Connelly Theatre, 220 E. 4th St. 212-206-1515. Through March 2.)

TAKE ME OUT
Richard Greenberg's popular play, directed by Joe Mantello, is set to reopen in the Walter Kerr. In previews. (219 W. 48th St. 212-239-6200.)

OPENED RECENTLY

BEDBOUND
The curtain falls (yes, falls) at the beginning of this startling piece of theatre, written and directed by Enda Walsh, to reveal a man and a woman in a bed—he in full business dress, she in a nightgown—enisled in a floor-to-ceiling sea of clutter worthy of "American Buffalo." The initial choked silence of the man (Brían F. O'Byrne) soon explodes in a storm of words that tells a tale of violence, sex, and the furniture business, and only gradually reveals the relationship between the two characters. O'Byrne's performance as the insanely ambitious salesman is both scary and hilarious. As the woman, Jenna Lamia is equally impressive, providing comic and tragic grace notes. Set design by Klara Zieglerova. (Irish Repertory, 132 W. 22nd St. 212-727-2737. Closes March 2.)

LA BOHÈME
Baz Luhrmann has reset Puccini's opera in a cinematic Paris of 1957—on the eve of Godard's "Breathless"—and his *moto*-ready cast of young studs looks the part. Rodolfo and Marcello wear leather jackets and boots, Mimi sports a trench coat, and the red-hot Musetta (Jessica Comeau) has hipster slacks and an Ann-Margret kittenishness. For Musetta's splendid "Quando me'n vo," the ensemble gathers on a silverized Parisian street that looks like a black-and-white Doisneau shot come to life. Rodolfo (David Miller) and Mimi (Ekaterina Solovyeva) have terrific voices, and they're both eye candy: he's a young Belmondo to her Eva Marie Saint. When this Rodolfo first lays eyes on this Mimi, enough heat jumps between the two of them to melt the snowflakes. It makes you want to hop a plane to Paris—the Paris in Baz Luhrmann's mind. Note: Three rotating casts perform the lead roles. (Broadway, 1681 Broadway, at 53rd St. 212-239-6200.)

CLASS MOTHERS '68
On a set designed by Beowulf Boritt that shifts, scene by scene, into the living rooms and lives of six different mothers, Priscilla Lopez portrays all the moms—each made fully individual by Lopez's gift for accents and physical expression, each connected by anxiety over her child's impending high-school graduation. Written by Eric H. Weinberger and directed by Jeremy Dobrish. (Clurman, 410 W. 42nd St. 212-279-4200. Closes Feb. 9.)

COMEDIANS
Trevor Griffiths' 1975 play, revived by the New Group, has two frames. In the outer one—a satisfying tale of aspiration, success, and failure—a group of working-class comics in Manchester hone their craft with an old hand named Eddie Waters whose punch lines have lost their wallop. Waters, played by Jim Dale—who began his career as a comedian in British music halls—shows generous charisma, and the students' interrelation with him and with one another is interesting. But Griffiths' earnest inner frame—which charges that dark humor is immoral after the Second World War—leadens the lightness of the comedy around it. (Acorn, 410 W. 42nd St. 212-279-4200. Closes Feb. 23.)

COOKIN' AT THE COOKERY: THE MUSIC AND TIMES OF ALBERTA HUNTER
There is a scene in the Melting Pot's bio-musical of the blues singer Alberta Hunter in which the whip-slim mimic Debra Walton—who plays Alberta as a little girl, and goes on to play a white nurse, an octogenarian club manager named Barney Josephson, and a hep-cat record producer named Chris Albertson—transforms herself in voice and expression into Louis Armstrong and accompanies Ann Duquesnay (as the grown Alberta) in a duet of "When the Saints Go Marching In." It's a preternatural accomplishment—Jane Horrocks meets

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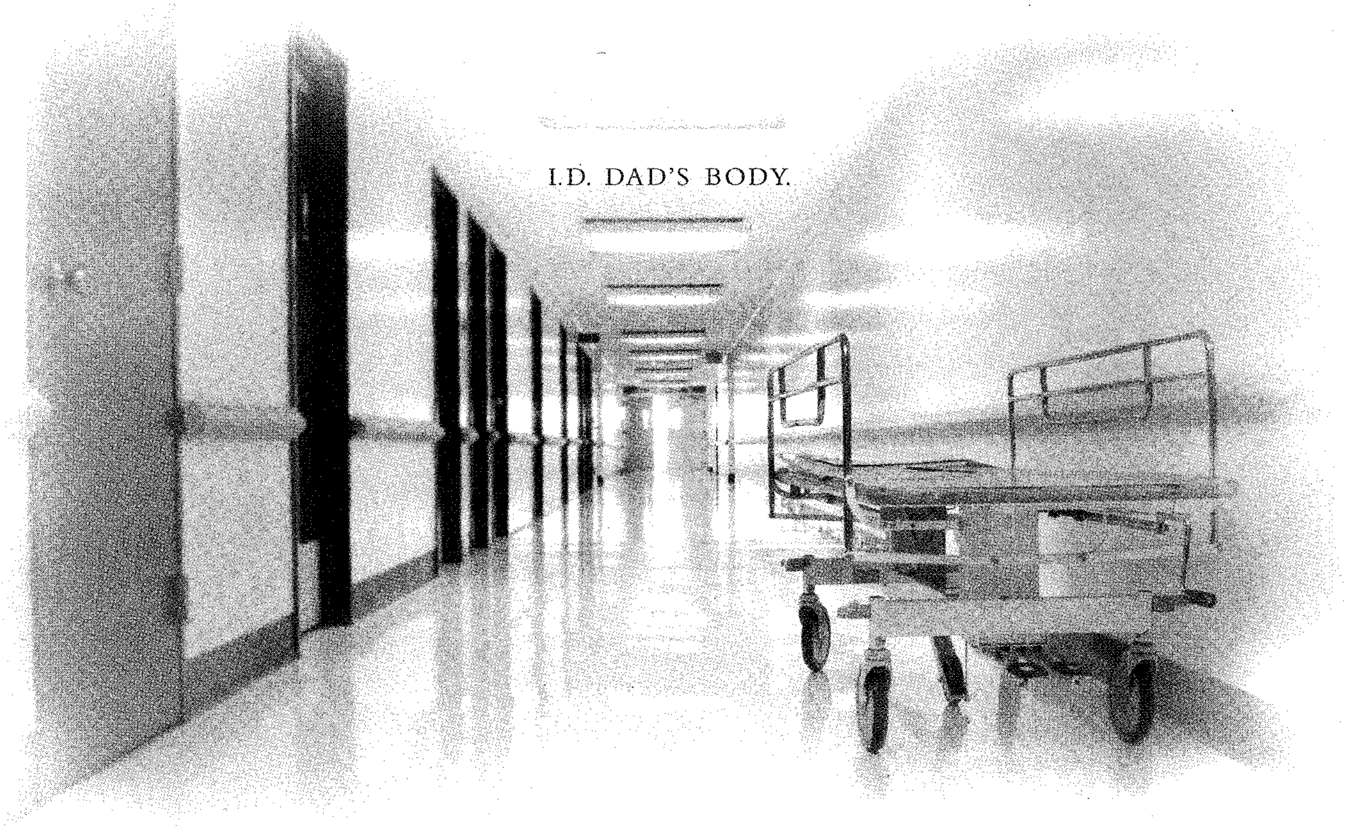

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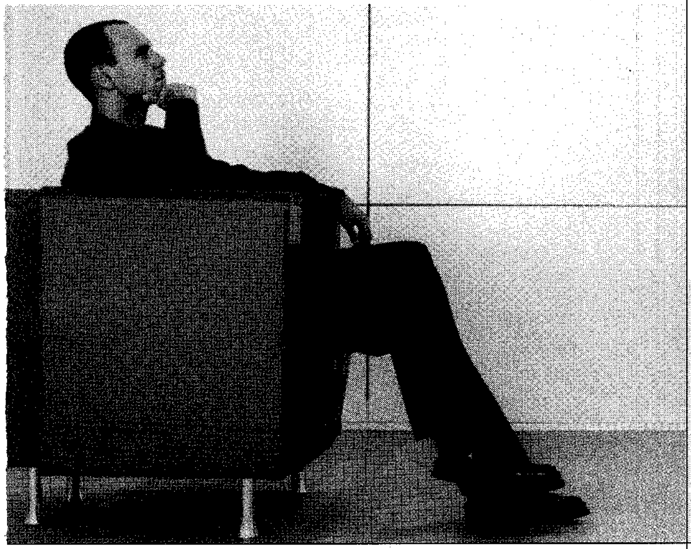

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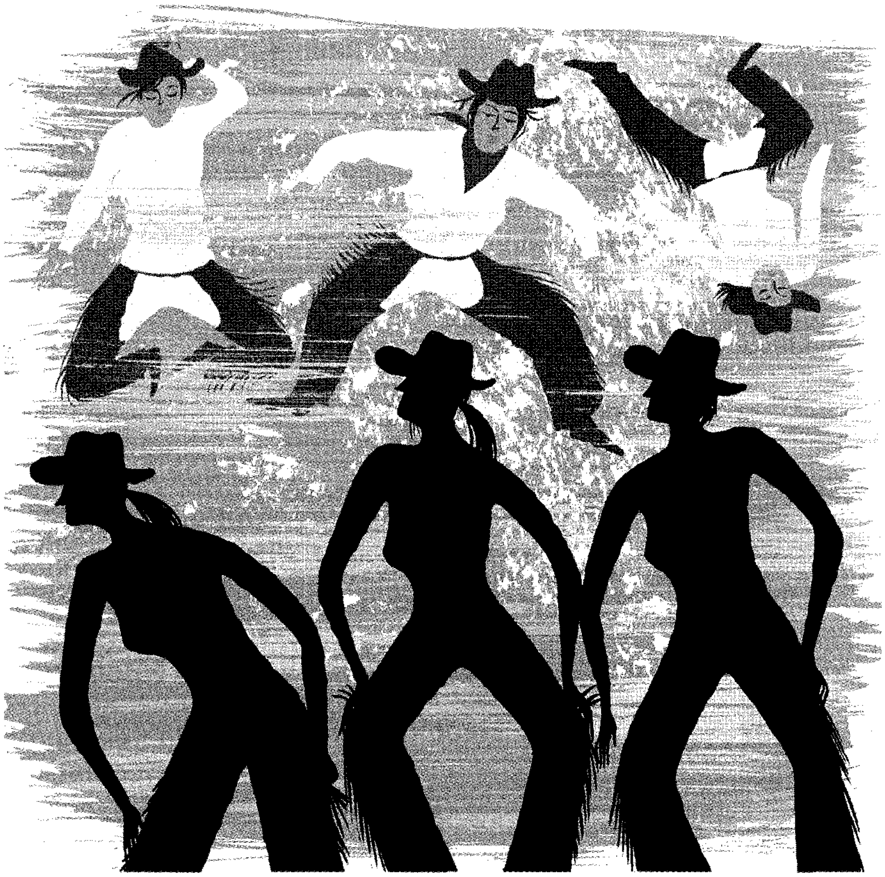
Eddie Murphy. This is just one highlight of an exhilarating production, in which Duquesnay's singing (particularly of "My Handy Man Ain't Handy No More") and the duo's acting keep the audience rapt. Written and directed by Marion J. Caffey, with musical direction by George Caldwell. (Theatre 3, at 311 W. 43rd St. 212-279-4200. Closes March 2.)

DEBBIE DOES DALLAS

This saucy, tongue-in-cheek musical, choreographed with extreme limberness by Jennifer Cody and directed by Erica Schmidt (who adapted it from the porn film), redefines "physical" comedy. When cheerleading captain Debbie (Jamie Day) is tapped to join the Texas Cowgirls, her squad takes on lubricious after-school jobs to help pay her airfare to Dallas. Played with po-mo brio by a gifted cast, including Day, Mary Catherine Garrison as a jealous fellow-cheerleader, Jeff Skowron as Debbie's quarterback heartthrob, and Ken Barnett as the mustachioed Señor Bradley. (Jane Street Theatre, 113 Jane St. 212-239-6200.)



Clove Galilee and her cowgirls dance in "Trick Saddle," at P.S. 122 (see Dance).

JOSÉ LUIS MERINO

DONMAR WAREHOUSE

"Twelfth Night" and "Uncle Vanya" have arrived from London to run in repertory at BAM. The ensemble cast includes Emily Watson, Simon Russell Beale, Helen McCrory, and Mark Strong. Directed by Sam Mendes. (Reviewed in our issue of 2/3/03.) (BAM's Harvey Theatre, 651 Fulton St. 718-636-4100. Closes Feb. 9.)

FIFTH OF JULY

Robert Sean Leonard and Parker Posey star in a Signature Theatre Company production of the first play in Lanford Wilson's Talley trilogy, directed by Jo Bonney. (Peter Norton Space, 555 W. 42nd St. 212-244-7529.)

FLOWER DRUM SONG

Part fashion show, part night-club act, part hymn to Asian-American diversity, David Henry Hwang's update of the 1958 Rodgers and Hammerstein show, set in San Francisco's Chinatown, works far better than the original. Directed and choreographed by Robert Longbottom. (11/4/02) (Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 212-239-6200.)

HANK WILLIAMS: LOST HIGHWAY

To sink any deeper into Hank Williams's blues, you'd need to hop into a pickup truck, drive to Nashville, and buy a bottle of J.D. In Randal Myler's beguiling musical biography of the hard-drinking, softhearted crooner, Jason Petty retraces Williams's journey from hardscrabble childhood to honky-tonk renown. The audience keeps him company all the while, tapping their toes even when he's so lonesome he could cry. (Manhattan Ensemble Theatre, 55 Mercer St. 212-239-6200. Closes Feb. 23.)

JULIA SWEENEY IN THE FAMILY WAY

The "Saturday Night Live" veteran Julia Sweeney (best known for her androgynous character, Pat) sheds light, and humor, on the arduous process of becoming a single parent of an adopted child in her latest autobiographical one-woman show. Starting out with her late-thirties realization: "Oh my God! I forgot to have a family," Sweeney's journey leads her into Los Angeles fertility clinics, French biking tours, Peruvian orphanages, Tibetan monasteries, and an adoption agency in China. With her keen storytelling ability and her talent for mimicking a multitude of characters—from her barren Irish-Catholic aunts to Chinese officials whose biggest concern is that adoptive parents not be gay—Sweeney gives a flattering nod to nontraditional families. Directed by Mark Brokaw. (Ars Nova Theatre, 511 W. 54th St. 212-206-1515.)

JULIUS CAESAR

In Karin Coonrod's urgent staging, Shakespeare's history opens with clashing cymbals as a projected image of the words "Julius Caesar" fades into an eerily modern backdrop. Men in dark suits and overcoats crowd around Caesar, tempting him with a newsprint crown as ticker-tape confetti swirls around their legs and blinding stadium lights flash. Douglas Stein's set, Catherine Zuber's costumes, and David Weiner's lighting all conspire to bring the lessons of hubris and betrayal to the present age of Internet bubble and political brinksmanship, and most of the players feel as contemporary as the set. Earl Hindman's Caesar has the bluster of a used-car salesman and is scarcely imaginable as a general, Daniel Oreskes' Cassius shows the petty perfidy of a Gordon Gekko, and Graham Winton's Mark Antony recalls a football buddy. They are outmatched by Thomas M. Hammond, whose stirring portrayal of Brutus is both timely and timeless, but in spite of his noble contribution, the play shows more grandstanding than gravitas. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 212-239-6200. Closes March 2.)

KIMBERLY AKIMBO

Manhattan Theatre Club presents a new play by David Lindsay-Abaire, which spins a story around a teen-age girl afflicted with a premature aging condition. Starring Ana Gasteyer and, as the girl, the versatile sexagenarian Marylouise Burke. Set design by Robert Brill. (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 212-581-1212.)

THE LOVE-HUNGRY FARMER

A poignant quasi-comedy about a bachelor farmer's efforts to find himself a wife. This one-man show, adapted by and starring Des Keogh, is based on the short stories of the Irish writer John B. Keane. Although there are no surprises in the show's presentation of the battle of the sexes and no real bite in its glimpses of the social and religious reasons underlying the farmer's romantic failures, Mr. Keogh's performance makes the show's ninety minutes continually engaging. He allows the audience to feel the farmer's humiliations and loneliness but also to appreciate his bemusement at the undeniable humor of some of his misadventures. Directed by Charlotte Moore. (Irish Repertory Studio Theatre, 132 W. 22nd St. 212-727-2737. Closes Feb. 16.)

MEDEA

In her daring modern interpretation of Euripides' drama, well directed by Deborah Warner, Fiona Shaw enters wearing sunglasses, a cardigan sweater, and a tidy summer dress, the picture of almost demure self-control. She has a lithe, muscular body and a sinuous mind to match, but she is a nervy woman pushed to the end of her tether, her mind and heart racing in adrenaline-pumping panic. (12/23 & 30/02) (Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 212-307-4100. Closes Feb. 22.)

MONSIEUR IBRAHIM AND THE FLOWERS OF THE KORAN

The Play Company presents a work by the French playwright Eric-Emmanuel Schmitt (with an English text by Stéphane Laporte) that depicts a friendship between a troubled Jewish boy and an Arab man in nineteen-sixties Paris. Directed by Maria Mileaf. Ed Vassallo stars. (McGinn/Cazale Theatre, 2162 Broadway, at 76th St. 212-206-1515. Closes Feb. 16.)

PANIC! (HOW TO BE HAPPY!)

In "Panic!," the avant-garde director Richard Foreman revisits themes he has explored in previous work: the limitations of language, the way that a performance reshapes itself during viewing, and the differences between men and women and how their attempts to connect generally end in some kind of violence. Watching the four main performers who make up the nucleus of Foreman's Ontological-Hysteric Theatre—including the beguiling Elina Lowensohn—we know we're in the presence of an ensemble in the best sense of the word. The actors embody separate aspects of Foreman's dense, difficult, often hilarious mind, working together. (St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. 212-533-4650.)

RADIANT BABY

George C. Wolfe directs a new musical about the nineteen-eighties urban artist Keith Haring, with a book by Stuart Ross; music by Debra Barsha; lyrics by Ira Gasman, Stuart Ross, and Debra Barsha; and a set by Riccardo Hernández. The choreography is by Fatima Robinson, who is known for her work in Gap commercials and music videos for Michael Jackson, Mary J. Blige, the Backstreet Boys, and others. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 212-239-6200.)

SHANGHAI MOON

In Charles Busch's swanning romp through thirties film conceits, set in Shanghai in 1931, Busch is Lady Sylvia Allington, a red-headed American temptress whose satin curves and breathy accent (somewhere in between Cary Grant's and Joan Greenwood's) captivate both her credulous, constipated husband, Lord Allington—memorably rendered by Daniel Gerroll, who later doubles as an opium-smuggling pirate—and General Gong Fei, played by B. D. Wong, who makes his entrance in elaborate military dress, cracking a bullwhip. Every part is actor's taffy, from the Shanghai madam Mrs. Caroll (Becky Ann Baker) to Gong Fei's discarded concubine, Mah Li (Sekiya Billman), to the hunchbacked, long-whiskered temple attendant Dr. Wu, played with relish by Marcy McGuigan. As Queen Victoria averred in her review of "The Mikado," "The story is rather silly"—but that doesn't keep it from being wonderful, giddy fun. Directed by Carl Andress. (Greenwich House, 27 Barrow St. 212-633-9632.)

TARTUFFE
In the Roundabout production of Molière's farce, Kathryn Meisle (as Elmire) has the look of a very young Diana Rigg. Her open, intelligent face lets us know that, even if Elmire suffers fools gladly, she remains mistress of her own appealing wit. As Orgon, her pious, deluded husband, Brian Bedford hams it up with all sorts of tics, widening his eyes and sighing loudly, while Henry Goodman plays the trickster Tartuffe as a sexy rogue who takes pleasure in all kinds of flesh. But it's Meisle who, with her low-key comic relief, makes us forgive the show's otherwise groaning pyrotechnics. Directed by Joe Dowling. (2/3/03) (American Airlines, 227 W. 42nd St. 212-719-1300. Closes Feb. 23.)

THE TYPOGRAPHER'S DREAM
The Clubbed Thumb Theatre Company presents a new work by the San Francisco playwright Adam Bock, directed by Drew Barr. (HERE, 145 Sixth Ave., near Spring St. 212-647-0202. Closes Feb. 23.)

THE WINTER'S TALE
Barry Edelstein directs the Classic Stage Company's production of Shakespeare's play, with David Strathairn as King Leontes. (Reviewed in this issue.) (136 E. 13th St. 212-677-4210.)

DANCE

NEW YORK CITY BALLET
Feb. 5 at 8: "Burleske," "Sonatas and Interludes," "Opus 19/The Dreamer," and "Agon." ♦ Feb. 6 at 8 (an all-Balanchine program): "Mozartiana," "Kammermusik No. 2," "Ballade," and "Who Cares?" ♦ Feb. 7 at 8: "Concerto Barocco," "Antique Epigraphs," "Chiaroscuro," and "Chaconne." ♦ Feb. 8 at 2: "Mozartiana, "Burleske," "Chiaroscuro," and "Who Cares?" ♦ Feb. 8 at 8 (an all-Balanchine program): "Kammermusik No. 2," "Valse-Fantaisie," "Variations Pour une Porte et un Soupir," and "Agon." ♦ Feb. 9 at 3: "Square Dance," "Opus 19/The Dreamer," and "Agon." ♦ Feb. 11 at 7:30: "Burleske," "Antique Epigraphs," "Chiaroscuro," and "Agon." (New York State Theatre, Lincoln Center. 212-870-5570.)

AMERICAN BALLET THEATRE
International dance competitions are often accused of emphasizing athleticism and mechanical technique over artistry, but they can also jump-start a performer's career. In "Dancers & Competitions," part of the Guggenheim's "Works and Process" series, soloists from American Ballet Theatre will share with students their experiences of competition, and will also give ballet lovers the rare treat of seeing some of the company's finest dancers—including Amanda McKerrow, Angel Corella, and Michele Wiles—perform solos and pas de deux in an unusually intimate setting. (Peter B. Lewis Theatre, Fifth Ave. at 89th St. 212-423-3587. Feb. 9-10 at 8.)

ROYAL BALLET SCHOOL
At the invitation of American Ballet Theatre, the graduating class of Great Britain's Royal Ballet School has come to Manhattan to demonstrate the school's gallant, pure style in performances of repertory works by Christopher Wheeldon, Stanton Welch, and former directors Kenneth MacMillan and Frederick Ashton. In March, the A.B.T. Studio Company will travel to Covent Garden's Linbury Theatre to return the favor. (Kaye Playhouse, 58th St. at Park Ave. 212-772-4448. Feb. 11-13 at 8.)

JODY OBERFELDER DANCE PROJECTS
In two new dances, Jody Oberfelder deploys her audaciously didactic method. In "Moved," she and her dancers—Martin Davis, Jen Mendez, and Rebekah Morin—interpret cues from ten of Stephin Merritt's lovesick Magnetic Fields ballads in a frolicsome, hammy way. For "Fido, Your Leash Is Too Long," Davis pulls Morin around by an elastic band, and in a solo to "The Cactus Where Your Heart Should Be," Oberfelder plucks at herself as if removing spines. Their gymnastics stress the humor of Merritt's lyrics, and ignore the irony. In "Tangram," a still more literal-minded piece, three dancers play with giant, angular pieces of a Chinese puzzle game, then mimic the shapes they form, twining their limbs into yogic shapes. (Clark Theatre at Lincoln Center. 212-924-0077. Feb. 5 at 7:30, Feb. 6-8 at 8, and Feb. 9 at 3.)

"TRICK SADDLE"
Jenny Rogers and Clove Galilee lassoed three other strapping female cowpokes to create this butch-grrrl rodeo homage to the mythic American horseman. The skits and shoot-'em-ups are laced together with a lighthearted water-ballet video by Rogers, who also directs, and live music by Allison Cornell. (P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 212-477-5288. Feb. 5-8 at 8:30 and Feb. 9 at 5.)

"ARTURELLA"
The Arthur Aviles Typical Theatre joins the rotating roster of performers in Dance Theatre Workshop's "Carnival" series with a revival of "Arturella"—a Cinderella story set in the South Bronx that includes murder, mayhem, Spanglish, Kabuki, and Santería. The gleeful Arthur Aviles, who plays the title role and choreographed the hour-long piece, stays true to Walt Disney's "Cinderella" on many counts; he uses the music and also transposes the movement of the animated characters to the bodies of his fourteen-member cast. Alberto Dennis and

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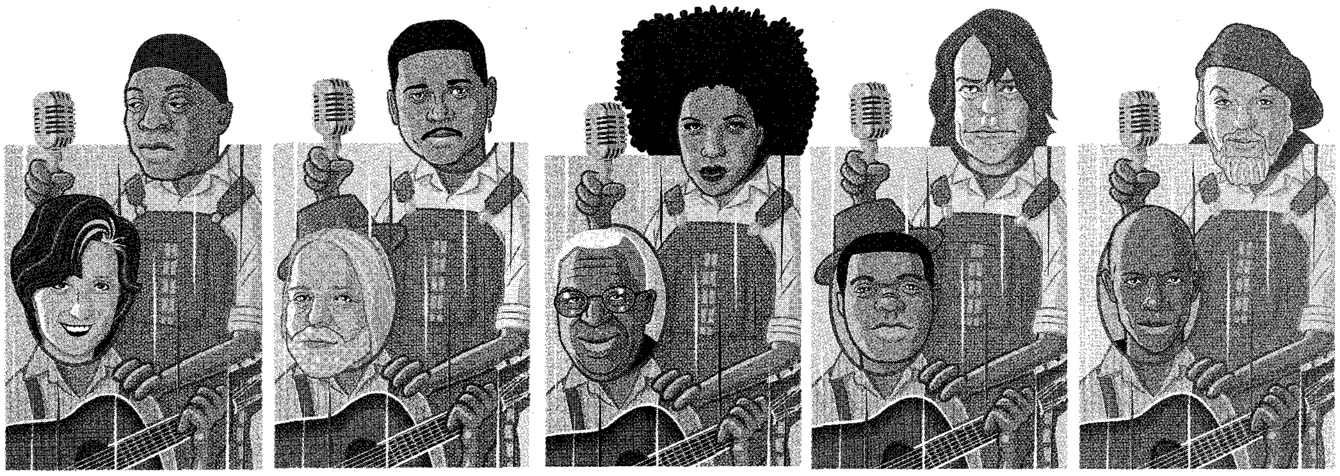


Bonnie Raitt, Chuck D, Gregg Allman, Aaron Neville, B. B. King, Macy Gray, Robert Cray, David Johansen, Keb' Mo', and Dr. John join another couple of dozen musicians at the "Salute to the Blues" show at Radio City Music Hall.

MICHAEL WELDON

Keila Cordova play the grimacing stepsiblings, and dancers playing birds, a cat, a dog, and wide-eyed mice chase each other in circles throughout the production. The group also performs "The Speed of Sight," a quieter, non-narrative work about communities in times of war and peace. (219 W. 19th St. 212-924-0077. Feb. 6-7 at 7. Through Feb. 16. Please call the box office for the full "Carnival" schedule.)

"FOOD FOR THOUGHT"
Danspace presents its seasonal benefit to help the hungry. Marýa Wethers curates the first evening, "Divercity," Sarah Skaggs curates the second (which features the trio "Girls on the Run," set to dialogue from the films "Picnic at Hanging Rock" and "Klute"), and Heidi Latsky curates the final evening, "Duets." Admission is $5 and two cans of food, or $10. (St. Mark's in-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. 212-674-8194. Feb. 7-9 at 8:30.)

FENÊTRES/WINDOWS
Gilles Obermayer presents eleven multimedia tableaux that tackle the subject of collaboration between art forms and are performed by six dancers, two musicians, a visual artist (who will paint throughout the evening), and a clown—Ambrose Martos, fresh from the acclaimed neo-vaudeville show "Happy Hour"—who pesters the dancers and musicians as they perform. With original music by Obermayer. (Merce Cunningham Studio, 55 Bethune St. 212-942-5792. Feb. 7-8 at 9 and Feb. 9 at 8.)

LUNAR NEW YEAR FESTIVAL
The Chinese Folk Dance Company, led by the Chinese choreographer Xiaoling Yang, presents eleven traditional dances to celebrate the advent of the Year of the Ram, performed by a local corps made up of both A.B.C. (American-born Chinese) and immigrants from Shanghai, Hubei, Tsingtao, Kwantung, and other parts. In "Strength in Brotherhood," men leap, whirl, and stomp, brandishing silver sabres; in "A Young Man's Fancy Turns To . . ." a trio of youths with bells on their ankles turn backflips for love, holding roses in their teeth. And in the northern-Chinese lion dance (different from the familiar Chinatown lion dance, in which the lion has one head and twenty legs) six dancers create three limber, furry golden-red-and-orange beasts, who rear up on their hind paws, cavorting like golden retrievers, but with fearful, snapping jaws. (Tribeca Performing Arts Center, 199 Chambers St. 212-220-1460. Feb. 8 at 2 and 7:30 and Feb. 9 at 2.)

NIGHT LIFE
CONCERTS

THE PRETENDERS
Eight studio albums and more than two decades after their début on the London punk scene, the Pretenders are still going strong. Death and attrition may have shifted the lineup behind their front woman, Chrissie Hynde, but her patented formula of hard-edged rock flecked with melodic balladry remains intact. With the **All Mighty Senators**, a Baltimore, Maryland, outfit led by Landis Expandis. The six-foot-plus singer and drummer performs with a special Pepto-Bismol-colored kit that allows him to play standing up. Expandis, who likes to dress as a superhero, cites as influences such luminaries as Spider-Man, Sun Ra, Bootsy Collins, and Martin Luther King, Jr. (Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 212-496-7070. Feb. 5-6 at 8.)

JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER
Although the trombone remains a rare bird in small groups, that hasn't stopped Wycliffe Gordon and Ron Westray, two Wynton Marsalis alumni, from basing their quintet around the slippery sliding interplay of their horns. (Kaplan Penthouse, Rose Building. 212-721-6500. Feb. 6-8 at 8.)

"SALUTE TO THE BLUES"
Congress recently declared 2003 to be the Year of the Blues—with a recession under way and war on the horizon, that sounds like the very definition of bad leadership. But current events shouldn't overshadow the all-star cast gathered here to celebrate the roots of America's musical tree. The performers include B. B. King, Buddy Guy, Jimmie Vaughan, Vernon Reid, and many, many others. The concert will be filmed. (Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 212-247-4777. Feb. 7 at 8.)

WORLD MUSIC INSTITUTE
The fleet fingers of the Spanish guitarist Tomatito close this year's flamenco festival. With Arcángel. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. For more information, call 212-545-7536. Feb. 8 at 8.)

"LYRICS & LYRICISTS"
The singers BJ Crosby, Lewis Cleale, and Valerie Wright pay tribute to the Eisenhower years, with a program of fifties Broadway show tunes from Cole Porter and Irving Berlin and pop songs by Leiber and Stoller. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 212-415-5500. Feb. 8 at 8, Feb. 9 at 2:30 and 8, and Feb. 10 at 2 and 8.)

BON JOVI
New Jersey's Jon Bon Jovi may once have been a mainstay of happy hair metal, but he has somehow become a revered elder statesman of the music business. His unlikely resurgence is thanks, in part, to his 2000 album, "Crush," a collection of radio-ready anthems that put the singer and his group back on the pop map. The band returned last year with "Bounce," a comparatively downbeat affair that abandoned their signature cheery chords for weighty, post-9/11 reflection. (Continental Airlines Arena, the Meadowlands. 212-307-7171. Feb. 10-11 at 7:30.)

LUTHER VANDROSS
The soul crooner takes the stage for a set of Valentine's Day concerts. (Radio City Music Hall. Feb. 11-12 and Feb. 14 at 8.)

CLUBS

Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives; it's advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.

B. B. KING BLUES CLUB & GRILL
237 W. 42nd St. (212-997-4144)—Feb. 7: From Detroit's Brewster housing project to the bright lights of Times Square, **Mary Wilson** carries on the legacy of the Supremes. Feb. 8: A night of seventies soul with the **Spinners.**

BLARNEY STAR
43 Murray St. (212-732-2873)—Feb. 7: **Ivan Goff,** the Dublin-born Uilleann Pipes and flute player from the Broadway production of "Riverdance," is joined by the pianist **Brendan Dolan.**

BOTTOM LINE
15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (212-228-6300)—Feb. 11: The mighty two-hit wonder **Orleans** returns (despite having never really gone away) to dust off the seventies staples "Still the One" and "Dance with Me," for teary-eyed torchbearers of AM radio's glory days.

BOWERY BALLROOM
6 Delancey St. (212-533-2111)—Feb. 4-5: The intricate pop outfit **Dismemberment Plan** is being dismembered; this may be one of the last chances to catch its wry and slightly detached lyrics and occasionally eclectic instrumentation. Feb. 8: **Donna the Buffalo,** a winning ensemble from Ithaca, New York, seasons its country sound with a pinch of accordion and a touch of reggae. Feb. 9-11: Initially pegged as a Brit-pop Monkees upon their mid-nineties début (Steven Spielberg once wanted to make them TV stars), the youngsters in **Supergrass** spent their next few albums attempting to downplay their fun-loving image. Their darker, more experimental sounds never really caught on in America, but now that retro garage rock is a critical favorite here, this British trio may have a chance to match their homeland success. Their latest album, "Life on Other Planets," is a return to form; it's an ebullient collection of catchy guitars, soaring harmonies, and clever arrangements.

FEZ
380 Lafayette St. (212-533-7000)—Feb. 5: The singer-songwriter **Ben Lee.** Feb. 7-8: The keyboardist Joe McGinty convenes the **Loser's Lounge** to reflect on the music of the Bee Gees. The **Mingus Big Band** still packs them in every Thursday. Dining.

GALAPAGOS
70 North 6th St., Williamsburg, Brooklyn (718-782-5188)—Feb. 6: A night of contemporary country music, New York City style, with the **Shack Band, Mad Cow Town,** and **Red Rooster.**

IRVING PLAZA
17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. (212-777-6800)—Feb. 7: The **Donnas** infuse the street-gang uniformity of the Ramones (they've all taken the same first name) with classic girl-group coquettish charm.

With **Ok Go** and **Longwave.** Feb. 8: The enduring outfit **Los Lobos.** Feb. 9-10: Singer-songwriter **Aimee Mann.**

JOE'S PUB
425 Lafayette St. (212-539-8777)—Feb. 10: The Zimbabwe native and pioneering mbira (thumb piano) player **Stella Chiweshe** makes her first New York City appearance in nearly a decade. Feb. 11: Woody Guthrie's daughter recently invited the East German cabaret singer **Hans Eckardt Wenzel** to peruse her father's vast archives (the same body of work that was at the root of Billy Bragg and Wilco's two excellent Mermaid Avenue albums). Wenzel picked out ten new songs for a new record, due out later this year.

S.O.B.'S
204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (212-243-4940)—Feb. 7: The seasoned entertainer **Buckwheat Zydeco.** Dining.

SOUTHPAW
125 Fifth Ave., Park Slope (718-230-0236)—Feb. 7: **Citizen Cope** is Clarence Greenwood, a Memphis-born singer-songwriter who recently moved here from Washington, D.C. He favors music that often falls through the cracks; complex narratives about everything from race to life on the streets to religion are layered over slow grooves and funky beats. One thing working in his favor is Carlos Santana, who offered the Citizen a spot on his latest collaborative album, "Shaman." Sharing the bill is another FM radio outlaw, **Greg Garing.** A leader of the local old-time country scene, Garing runs a Nashville sensibility through an urban filter. Feb. 8: **Supergrass** (see the Bowery Ballroom).

TABLES FOR TWO

KORI
253 Church St. (212-334-0908)—Somewhere between the spa seriousness of Korean restaurants like Clay, on Mott Street, and the steamy family-style informality of the brazier joints in the garment district lies Kori (the name means "link"), a serene and playful Tribeca restaurant where Martinis are made with slippery *soju* (sweet-potato vodka) and the traditional *bulgogi* beef barbecue arrives pre-grilled and crunchy with toasted pine nuts. The décor slyly taps into both Asian and Western ironies. The bar is a glass-topped rock garden and underneath its surface—beneath the ginger kamikazes and sojutinis—moss grows among smooth black stones and collages that look like Dadaist beer mats. One reads: "The gods get bored with people who have no stories."

Kori's chef and owner, Hyanghwa Kim, a former stage actress in Seoul, resists the fusion label, although her cuisine does strive for a truce between North and South Korea. "My family-in-law is very conservative, and I married the oldest son, so as his wife, I had to cook for all the family members, sometimes thirty people," she says. "My family-in-law comes from North Korea, and I come from the south, so I blend the recipes for both."

The dumplings in Kim's *mandu guk* soup have tender, thin wrappers that let the beef exhale its full fragrance ("I add sticky-rice flour to the dough"). The *insam* salad is an island of shredded celery and ginseng on a sea of puréed Korean pear and sharp mustard. As the waiter serves each plate, he asks, "May I stir for you?" before disassembling the still-life. One entrée stands out: the *jang uh,* a fillet of grilled, smoked eel steeped in a sauce that takes Kim twenty-four hours to prepare. At about twenty times the payload of the typical *unagi* roll, it's more eel than most people have ever seen, but in its soy-apple-lemon glaze and paired, for example, with the spicy *duk bokki* rice nuggets it goes fast. (Open weekdays for lunch and dinner, and Saturdays for dinner. Entrées $12.95-$24.95.)

—*Liesl Schillinger*

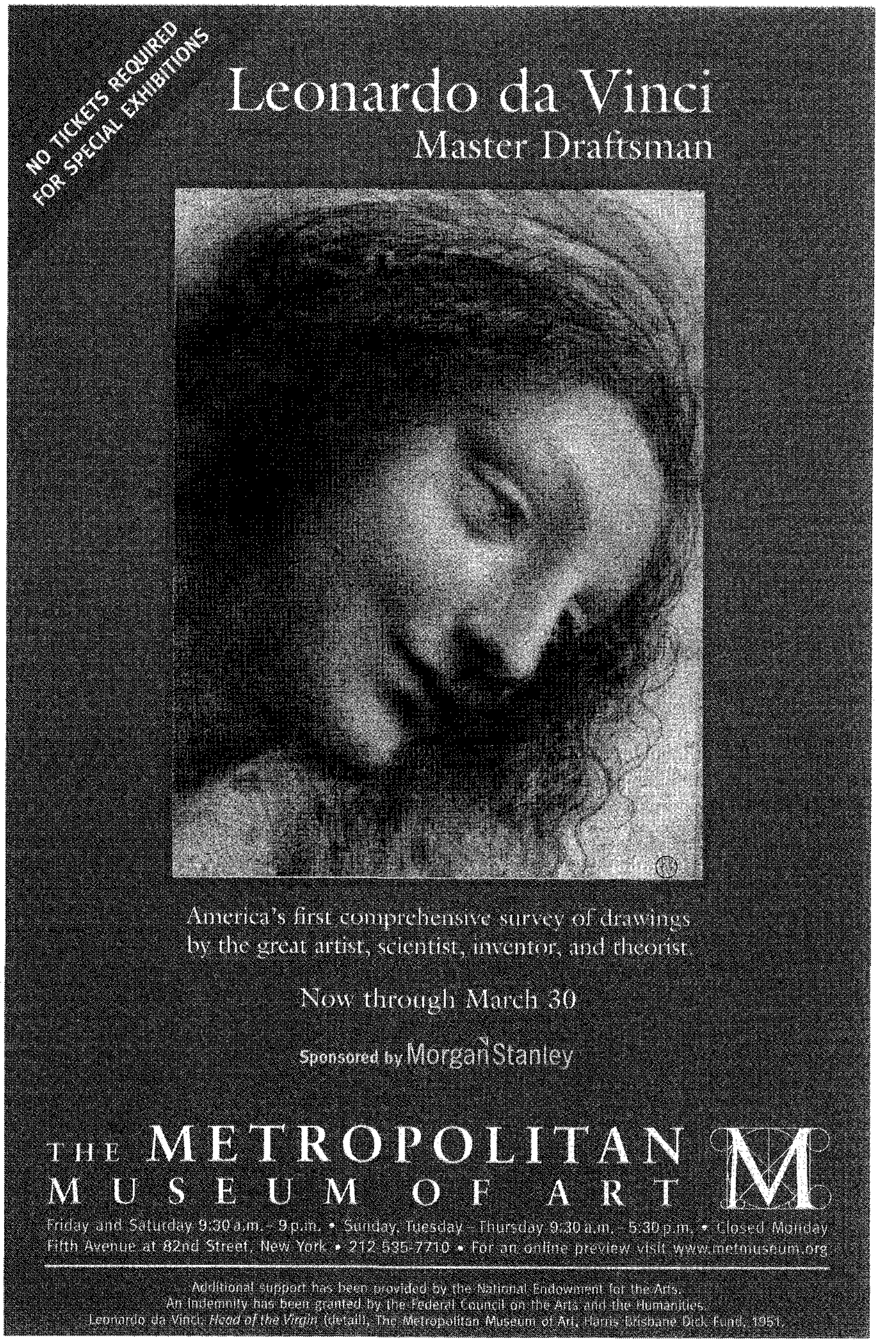
JAZZ AND STANDARDS

BIRDLAND
315 W. 44th St. (212-581-3080)—Feb. 6-8: You want to pay tribute to Dizzy Gillespie, first you find trumpeters. The sweeping assembly of brass players lined up here is staggering: Randy Brecker, Steve Bernstein, Eddie Henderson, Lew Soloff, Terrel Stafford, Ryan Kisor, Jim Rotundi, Ingrid Jensen, Don Sickler, and Jeremy Pelt are all part of the star-studded gathering.

BLUE NOTE
131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (212-475-8592)—Through Feb. 9: The **Bob James** trio. Though his name has long been synonymous with smooth jazz, the pianist James uses his rare trio gigs to remind us that many moons ago he was Sarah Vaughan's accompanist, and that he even cut an avant-tinged session for the ESP label back in the sixties.

BOTTOM LINE
15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (212-228-6300)—Feb. 8: The **Howard Fishman** quartet. The self-taught guitarist and gravelly-voiced singer Fishman, a Connecticut native who spent his musically formative years in New Orleans, makes music that defies easy characterization. With his violinist Russell Farhang, he channels the hot jazz of Django Reinhardt and Stephane Grappelli. More recently, however, Fishman added a drummer (here it's Mark McLean) to the group in the service of his nascent passion for contemporary rock. The Big Easy trumpeter Kevin Louis is covering for the regular band member Erik Jekabson, so this show has the potential to warm up the room with a little pre-Mardi Gras spirit. With **Mary Lee's Corvette.**

IRIDIUM
1650 Broadway, at 51st St. (212-582-2121)—Through Feb. 9: As jazz supergroups go, **ScoLoHoFo** should be hard to beat. This quartet unites the guitarist John Scofield, the saxophonist Joe Lovano, the bassist Dave Holland, and the drummer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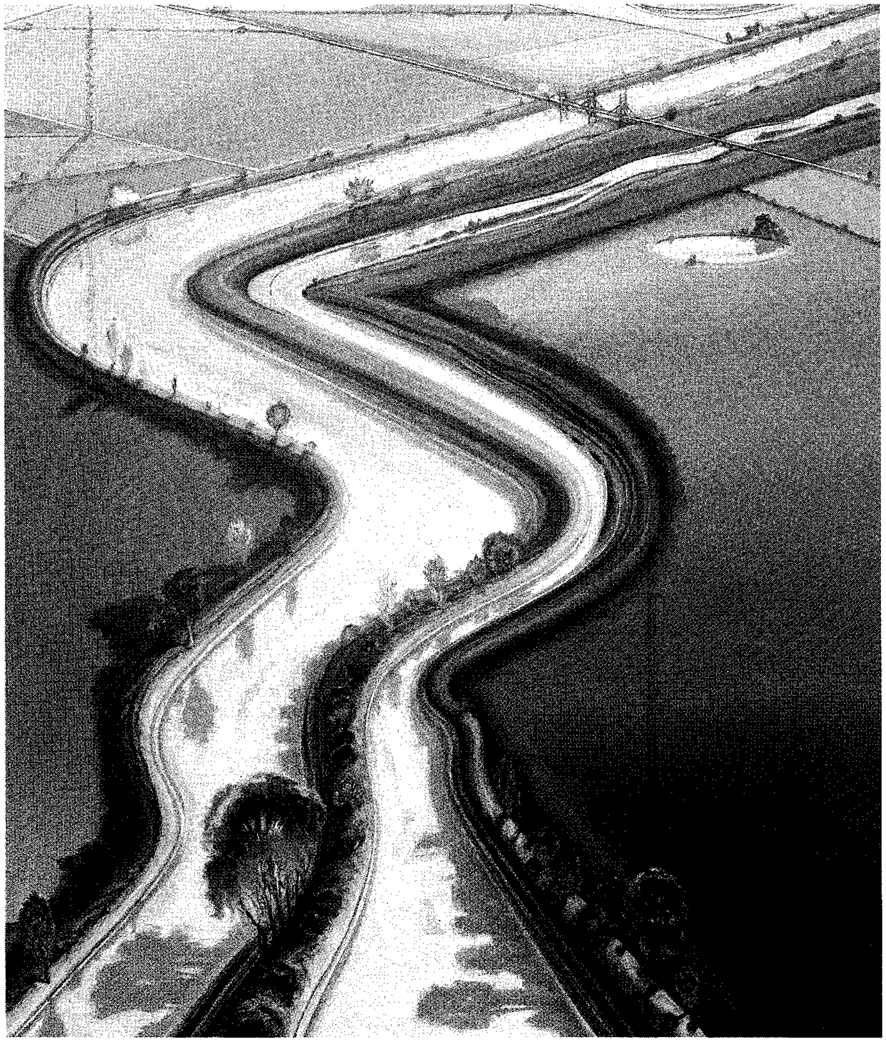
Leonardo da Vinci: *Head of the Virgin* (detail), The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1951.



"Fallow Fields," by Wayne Thiebaud, at Stone.

Al Foster. It may be a group of A-list players who have all worked together in one form or the other over the years, but their impressive new album, "OH!," suggests that familiarity, at least in this case, doesn't have to breed contempt. Mondays belong to the electric-guitar innovator **Les Paul.**

JAZZ STANDARD
116 E. 27th St. (212-576-2232)—Through Feb. 9: The **Charles McPherson** quartet. Throw a rock these days and you'll hit a competent bebop saxophonist, but when you're in the presence of an authentic master like McPherson, the style takes on new meaning and power. McPherson has surely kept evolving since he was a Charlie Parker acolyte, but the blues-enriched harmonic gallops of bop still inform his most persuasive improvising. Dining.

VILLAGE VANGUARD
178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (212-255-4037)—Through Feb. 9: The **Jacky Terrasson** trio. His latest opus, "Smile," isn't the earth-shaker that this ever-promising pianist keeps suggesting he's capable of, but in his element, onstage, Terrasson can display enough nervy moves and deep pockets of lyricism to keep you a believer. The **Vanguard Jazz Orchestra** holds sway on Mondays.

ART
MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM
Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. (212-879-5500)—The staggering riches of **"Leonardo da Vinci, Master Draftsman"** make it clear that art was an expedient profession for a man of boundless drives. In all fields, he anticipated what unknown things, once they became known, would probably look like. His aesthetic research went straight to ultimate effects of sublime beauty—but strangely, he seemed to have no personal use for it. One is struck by the contrasting human warmth of drawings by Leonardo's teacher Andrea del Verrocchio and by some of his pupils and other followers. Leonardo wasn't exactly cold, but something more intimidating: indifferent. (Add modern irony to his temperament, and he would be Marcel Duchamp.) His strangulated heart found grisly relief in contemplating war, natural disasters, and the grotesque. Through March 30. ♦ In the visual arts, the first surge of self-conscious black achievement came in the thirties, spurred by the financial support of the W.P.A. The seventy-odd prints and paintings of **"African-American Artists, 1929-1945"** showcase the period's anecdotal temperament. Outsiders like Bill Traylor and Horace Pippin look as appealing as ever, but the majority of the work here feels hampered by its own honorable intentions. Seeing Jacob Lawrence in this context, you suddenly appreciate how far he rose above the folksy piety of his peers, both black and white. Through May 4. ♦ **"The Legacy of Genghis Khan: Courtly Art and Culture in Western Asia, 1256-1353."** From a show named after a man on the move, you'd expect what? Gilded tent flaps? They're here, but the focus is on an urbane, nearly hundred-year dynasty that was founded in Iran by Hülegü, a grandson of Genghis. Ceremonial and decorative objects and lots of illustrated manuscripts—not to mention dauntingly profuse curatorial wall texts—document a cosmopolitan milieu in which Islamic styles got infused with Chinese ideas. Educational. Through Feb. 16. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:30, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 9.)

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART (MOMA QNS)
33rd St. at Queens Blvd., Long Island City (212-708-9400)—**"Masterworks of German Expressionism"** presents twenty prints by members of the Brücke group, including Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Emil Nolde, and Max Pechstein, as well as artists working between the World Wars, such as Max Beckmann and Käthe Kollwitz. Through Feb. 24. (Open Thursdays through Mondays, 10 to 5, and Friday evenings until 7:45.)

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM
Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (212-423-3500)—An exhibition of installations by the winner of the Hugo Boss Prize, Pierre Huyghe. Through May 4. (Open Saturdays through Wednesdays, 10 to 5:45, and Fridays, 10 to 8.)

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART
Madison Ave. at 75th St. (212-570-3676)—Although Gee's Bend, Alabama, is isolated by poverty and a sharp curve in the Alabama River, the group of hamlets there has for generations fostered quiltmaking as a virtuoso performance in frugality. Sixty-nine hand-sewn quilts, dating from the thirties to the present and incorporating a wild variety of geometries, colors, and fabrics, are on view. Though the women of the African-American community—many of them members of the local Pettway clan—quilt and sing together (a documentary film showing continuously in the gallery broadcasts the sewing circles' amazing harmonies), no two quilts are alike. Each woman has a fiercely individual approach. The visual compositions are electric with abstraction of the most visceral sort, aesthetically inventive and born of necessity. Through March 9. (Open Tuesdays through Thursdays, and weekends, 11 to 6; Fridays, 1 to 9.)

P.S. 1 CONTEMPORARY ART CENTER
22-25 Jackson Ave., at 46th Ave., Long Island City (718-784-2084)—If, as we're told, the average American watches five hours of television a day, he would still need almost a week to view all the works in **"Video Acts."** More than a hundred tapes, all on loan from the San Francisco-based Kramlich Collection and its subsidiary, New Art Trust, are displayed simultaneously on separate monitors in the ground-floor galleries. The emphasis is on performance art and the medium's early years in the sixties and seventies. There's a smattering of more recent work, notably a dazzling Pipilotti Rist that provides colorful respite from the onslaught of granular black-and-white. Special attention is given to Bruce Nauman, Vito Acconci, Marina Abramovic and Ulay, and Joan Jonas, all of whom have a gallery of their own. Through April 13. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays, from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.

AGNES MARTIN
Within the pale confines of her signature style, Martin has come up with a show that feels almost rugged. She has exchanged the prim Baby Gap pastels of her last exhibition for thin transparent washes that wander shakily from their ruled guidelines. One painting is provocatively close to being blank. The effect is less comforting and more Spartan, a sort of low-fat version of Martin's assertive blandness. Through Feb. 24. (Pace Wildenstein, 32 E. 57th St. 212-421-3292.)

WAYNE THIEBAUD
In the latest Golden State landscapes by the eighty-two-year-old artist, rivers luxuriate in sunlight, coiling around comically rectangular fields. Rows of neatly planted trees sprout like garnishes or birthday candles. Terra firma looks wiggly and welcoming. Whether or not Thiebaud was thinking about Willem de Kooning's late paintings, these share their spirit of intrepid, loose-limbed happiness. Through March 19. (Stone, 113 E. 90th St. 212-987-4997.)

"LIKENESSES & LANDSKIPS"
A feast of Tory fops, shrewd burghers, and unreal, willowy backgrounds, this lavish show proves that

Colonial portraiture is a weirder and more fascinating realm than we'd expect. The centerpiece is a Charles Wilson Peale portrait of the flamboyantly staid George Washington. There is also a wide selection of work by Trumbull, Feake, Earl, and the prodigiously talented J. S. Copley, who defected to England in 1774. One of his late English pictures, of languorously slumping aristocratic siblings, may stir up residual anti-redcoat sentiment. Through Feb. 8. (Hirschl & Adler, 21 E. 70th St. 212-535-8810.)

"MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY PORTRAITS"
Townsend Wolfe, director for many years of the Arkansas Art Center in Little Rock, has assembled this show, whose liveliness belies its plodding title, after he was asked to put together his "dream team." The show makes a powerful, if not exactly surprising, case for "people pictures." The selections are weaker when it comes to younger artists, and a Warhol drawing of a winking teen-ager is almost the sole concession to avant-garde taste. But in general, Wolfe's picks make for an appealing squad of mavericks and contrarians, from George Tooker and David Levine to Stanley Spencer and Al Leslie. Conceptualists seeking a remedial education might want to start here. Through March 1. (Forum, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 212-355-4545.)

Short List

SUZANNE CAPORAEL
Artemis Greenberg Van Doren, 730 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 212-445-0444. Through Feb. 15.

YVONNE JACQUETTE
DC Moore, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 212-274-2111. Through March 8.

RAYMOND PETTIBON
Zwirner & Wirth, 32 E. 69th St. 212-517-8677. Through Feb. 15.

ANNE TRUITT
Danese, 41 E. 57th St. 212-223-2227. Through Feb. 8.

GALLERIES—CHELSEA

FRANCO MONDINI-RUIZ
Gleeful, kitsch-laden tableaux assembled from the artist's storehouse of tchotchkes. Some suggest cultural critiques, like "Cheeses of Nazareth," in which a Christ figurine preaches his sermon on a round of gouda in lieu of the mount. Others are simple visual puns, devoid of any political one-two punch, like the dancing duo of hot dog and dachshund or a brown velvet purse stuffed with slices of chocolate cake. Through Feb. 8. (Taylor, 535 W. 22nd St. 646-230-0992.)

DONA NELSON
This impertinent master of the New York big painting keeps solving stylistic problems that you didn't know existed, veering between representation and abstraction. In this show, there are mountain landscapes in graphite on canvas, in one case augmented with modelling paste, sand, and slathered acrylic. There are also insouciantly ugly abstractions in relief, made with skeins of cheesecloth plastered to the canvas. Most wonderful are grand, tensile compositions in graphite and charcoal, like X-rayed de Koonings. In the fourth decade of her never predictable career, Nelson is painting like a house on fire. Through Feb. 9. (Cheim & Read, 547 W. 25th St. 212-242-7727.)

CARL OSTENDARP / KEVIN LANDERS
This sampling of Ostendarp's gouaches, timed to coincide with his retrospective at the Aldrich Museum, in Ridgefield, Connecticut, offers a sushi bar of eye-popping, sly-simple pictorial conceits: floppy hands and feet, drips, explosions, and balloons. The finest single image, an elegantly wobbly chocolate-colored column, divides the page neatly into halves, and leaves you thinking about figure-ground relationships, Barnett Newman, and Willy Wonka. Landers' photographs and sculptures offer art parodies in pedestrian settings: an Agnes Martin made of cigarette butts, a Gursky built from homemade sneakers. Through Feb. 22. (Dee, 545 W. 20th St. 212-924-7545.)

RAYMOND PETTIBON
"Follow me!—I'm the artist. I don't think we've met." So goes one text, accompanying the image of a torchbearer, in a two-gallery onslaught of poem-drawings by Pettibon, art's Eminem. There is little evident advance from the artist's early work (from the eighties) at Zwirner & Wirth to his recent stuff at David Zwirner, apart from more use of ugly, grabby color. Pettibon keeps subjecting crude visions of art, sex, religion, and baseball to finely phrased, cracked clarities of thought. He is demonic and modest, and given to delicate regrets: "This evening, and indeed all this day, I ought to have been reading and filling the margins of Malthus." Through Feb. 8. (David Zwirner, 525 W. 19th St. 212-727-2070. See also Uptown Short List.)

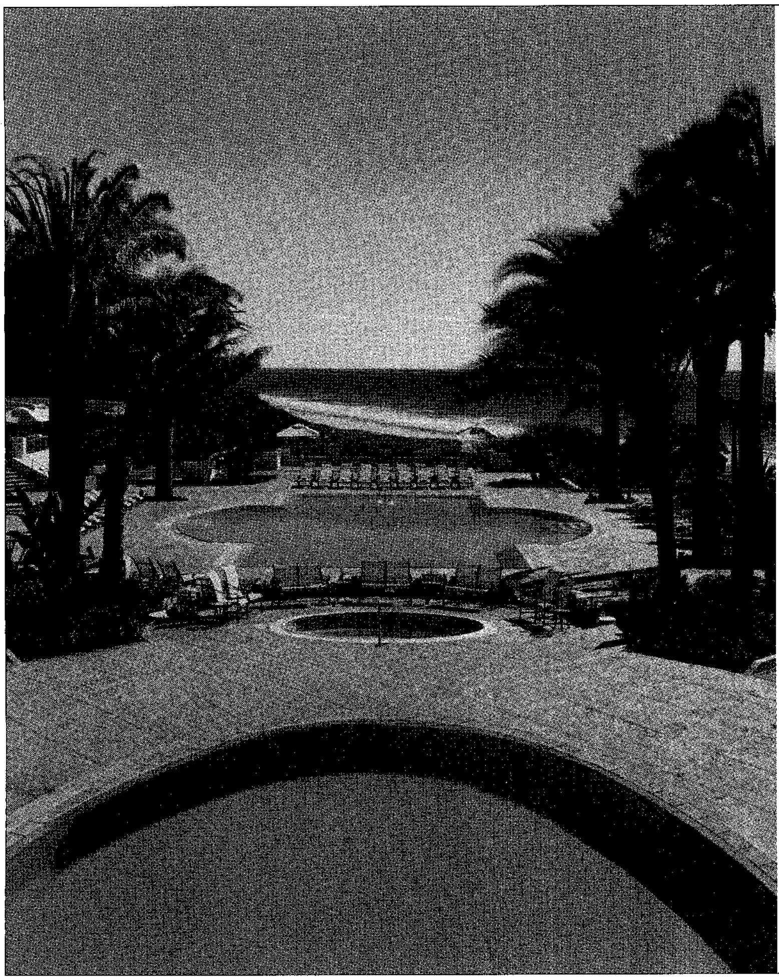
Short List

TIM GARDNER
303 Gallery, 525 W. 22nd St. 212-255-1121. Through Feb. 22.

IÑIGO MANGLANO-OVALLE
Protetch, 511 W. 22nd St. 212-633-6999. Through Feb. 15.

GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

THOMAS NOZKOWSKI
The first survey of drawings by one of our most modest masters tracks his wayward development from the late seventies to the present. Eccentricity and discipline shine out, as his attentions tack from bedside readings (Steven Runicman's "A History of the Crusades") to museum art (an impressive Miró impersonation), to willfully ham-handed textural experiments. The Nozkowski



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we know doesn't appear until 1993. And then he's gone: in the most recent drawings, contraband human figures appear. A necessary show for admirers, but first-timers may be nonplussed. Through March 1. (New York Studio School, 8 W. 8th St. 212-673-6466.)

"THE PARK AVENUE CUBISTS"

Four artists better known for patronage than for paintings. Albert E. Gallatin founded New York's first modern museum, in the very space that houses this show. George L. K. Morris was a backer and critic for the *Partisan Review.* His wife, Suzy Frelinghuysen, became an opera singer after exhausting her love of corrugated paper, seen here in collages that borrow from Picasso and Gris. The best works are the architectonic abstractions of Charles G. Shaw from the mid-thirties, skyscraper-filled ziggurats that owe more to Precisionism than to Cubism. Through March 29. (Grey Art Gallery, 100 Washington Square E. 212-998-6780.)

"Tony & Kenny," from 1977, by Chris Steele-Perkins, at Gallery 292.

"THE ROYAL ART LODGE"

The name of this Winnipeg art collective may conjure images of mounted moose heads, and this show has its share of stuffed animals, including a platypus and a life-size bear. (The former doubles as a paper shredder for rejected art works, and the latter reappears as a costume in a videotape.) But the group is best known for its winsome drawings, which line the gallery walls and may look familiar (Lodge members Marcel Dzama, Neil Farber, and Jon Pylypchuk have all shown in New York). Lately there's been much critical ballyhoo about youthquakes and craft. The quirky, homespun work in this wonderful show, by turns hilarious and sad, reveals what all the fuss is about. Through March 8. (The Drawing Center, 35 Wooster St. 212-219-2166.)

Short List

DAVID RABINOWITCH

Blum, 99 Wooster St. 212-343-0441.
Through March 1.

PHOTOGRAPHY

BERND AND HILLA BECHER

This German husband-and-wife team is justly famous for their forty-year project obsessively photographing water towers, blast furnaces, silos, and other gigantic metal things they have referred to as "anonymous sculptures." But if you're looking to see their stark, iconic representations of industry, you'll be in the wrong gallery. Here the Bechers show—for the first time—photographs of a whole enterprise rather than its components. Instead of a grid of vaguely varying cement mixers, you'll get houses spilling down a forested hillside toward a menacing factory that sits on a sludgy river. It's unnerving to see how little seems to have changed in these landscapes, but liberating to see how the Bechers' approach to them has. Through Feb. 15. (Sonnabend, 536 W. 22nd St. 212-627-1018.)

EDWARD BURTYNSKY

The shapes, patterns, and scale of these images, depicting landscapes that have been transformed by the oil industry, briefly distract the viewer from the destructive process inherent in drilling. A shimmering pipeline cuts a geometric maze through a serene, forested terrain. Expansive fields of monochromatic, earth-toned, mechanized rigs seem chaotic, yet also disciplined. Who knew there'd be so many crisscrossing power lines in the middle of an oil field? Not a single human is seen in these expanses, which gives the photographs the eerie semblance of functioning ghost towns. However, Burtynsky contrasts the enormity of such industrial terrain with traces of those who've changed it so radically: roads, tire tracks, and what at first glance seems to be a Tonka truck. Through Feb. 8. (Cowles, 537 W. 24th St. 212-925-3500.)

ELIZABETH HEYERT

Heyert's nearly life-size black-and-white prints are voyeuristic portraits of people engaged in the typically private act of sleeping. Isolated on a stark black background, each sleeping subject and unconscious gesture seems primed for Dr. Rorschach. Some couples are entwined in what could be the fetal embrace of twins, others don't touch and seem alone in their togetherness. Single sleepers appear to be floating, paused in the midst of a languid jig or pirouette, poised with confident nonchalance or vulnerable and lost. Heyert then projected these images onto ancient Sicilian ruins and rephotographed them. The resulting flesh—multi-toned swirls of speckled, cracked stone—conjures thoughts of human fragility and impermanence even if the sleepers have become heroic sculptures rising from a deep slumber. Through March 1. (Houk, 745 Fifth Ave. 212-750-7070.)

MICHAEL KENNA

Unlike the Japan of other contemporary photographers, for whom depicting that country means capturing the teen-age excess and neon bustle of Tokyo, Kenna's Japan is comprised of lonely, expansive landscapes, so empty as to appear not just a world but an era apart from the country's cities. Kenna is best known for his shadowy, big-sky architectural landscapes, but the intimate images here are restrained and exquisitely calibrated, as spare, misty, and elegant as a Chinese scroll painting. In one, the sky and the sea roil in a gray light so dreamy and diffused that it appears less a photograph and more a painting rendered in watery inks. Indeed, there are calligraphic elements in many of these photos, which seems appropriate for an artist who, rather than merely documenting a landscape, has captured the very essence of Japanese aestheticism. Through March 1. (Mann, 210 Eleventh Ave. 212-989-7600.)

CHRIS STEELE-PERKINS

The Beatles are often given credit for fathering England's modern youth subculture, but the Fab Four had a spectacular opening act: the teddy boys, loosely knit gangs of working-class youths united by their love of music, tight jeans, and extravagant, towering hairdos. The teddy-boy look was killed off by the frizzy hair and fringe of the hippies but was resurrected as part of the punk-rock aesthetic. A longtime Magnum photographer, Steele-Perkins captured all the energy and cool insouciance of the latter-day teds, and although it would have been easy to romanticize (or ridicule) the apparent confidence and outlandishness of his subjects, he managed to convey warmth without condescension. Some of the show's most memorable images are among the more sober—a portrait of two young men, their arms looped around each other, is both beautiful and poignant and even their elaborate rolled coiffures look more noble than ridiculous. Through March 15. (Gallery 292, 120 Wooster St. 212-431-0292.)

Short List

"WEEGEE'S TRICK PHOTOGRAPHY"

International Center of Photography, 1133 Sixth
Ave., at 43rd St. 212-857-0000. Through Feb. 16.

AUCTIONS AND ANTIQUES

CHRISTIE'S

Feb. 5 at 10 A.M.: The monthly House Sale, featuring a wide range of furniture, silver, rugs, and decorative art works offered at moderate prices. ♦ Feb. 11 at 10 A.M.: An auction of jewelry, including items from such firms as Buccellati, Tiffany & Co., and Van Cleef & Arpels. (20 Rockefeller Plaza, at 49th St. 212-636-2000.)

DOYLE

Feb. 5 at 10 A.M.: A sale of furniture, paintings, and decorations, along with a selection of porcelain, silver, prints, and rugs. ♦ Feb. 11 at 1: With the annual arrival of the Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show comes "Dogs in Art," Doyle's yearly auction of paintings, sculptures, and ephemera of the canine kind. Paintings by Samuel Fulton, John Emms ("Waiting for the Guns," expected to bring up to sixty thousand dollars), Maud Earl, and Edwin Landseer are among the highlights of the sale. (175 E. 87th St. 212-427-2730.)

SWANN

Feb. 10 at 10:30 A.M.: An auction of a hundred photographs. Works by Cameron (a photograph of Julia Duckworth, the mother of Virginia Woolf,

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estimated to sell for up to thirty thousand dollars), Talbot, Goldin, and Modotti are among the highlights of the sale. (104 E. 25th St. 212-254-4710.)

CLASSICAL MUSIC

OPERA

METROPOLITAN OPERA
The only reason to revive **"Il Pirata,"** the potboiler that put Bellini on the bel-canto map, is to provide a showcase for all-out vocal virtuosity—and this new staging, which débuted last fall, certainly delivers the goods. Renée Fleming brings daredevil agility and floating pianissimos to the role of Imogene, while Marcello Giordani and Dwayne Croft are a vocally distinguished pair of warring suitors; Bruno Campanella conducts. (Feb. 5 at 8 and Feb. 8 at 1:30. These are the final performances.) ♦ **"Die Entführung aus dem Serail"** receives its final performance of the season, with Alexandra Deshorties, Lyubov Petrova, Paul Groves, Tony Stevenson, Kurt Moll, and Matthias von Stegmann (in the speaking role of Pasha Selim); James Levine. (Feb. 6 at 8.) ♦ Olivier Tambosi's new production of **"Jenůfa,"** set in a towering old mill, aims to take Janáček's provincial tragedy into the realm of Sophocles, and with a uniformly powerful cast led by Karita Mattila in the title role and Deborah Polaski as her stern stepmother, Kostelnicka, it almost succeeds. Musically, the performance, conducted by Vladimir Jurowski, could scarcely be improved. Missing in the stylization of the acting and the symbolism of the stage design (including the most obtrusive rock in the history of the Met) is a quality essential to Janáček's quirky power—his buoyancy in the face of horror. With Kim Begley (in the role of Laca) and Christopher Ventris (as Števa). (Feb. 7 at 8.) ♦ Franco Zeffirelli's stately 1990 production of **"Don Giovanni,"** with Sondra Radvanovsky, Melanie Diener, Nicole Heaston, Peter Mattei (in the title role), Rainer Trost, Ferruccio Furlanetto, Patrick Carfizzi, and Eric Halfvarson (as the Commendatore); Sylvain Cambreling conducts. (Feb. 8 at 8.) ♦ With Anna Netrebko replacing Heaston. (Feb. 11 at 7:30.) ♦ The Met's new production of Berlioz's epic **"Les Troyens,"** conceived in a time of economic plenty, now seems like a dangerous extravagance. Unlike every other French opera of its time, this five-act leviathan (originally produced in a slashed-up three-act version in 1863) summons up a world: that of Virgil's Aeneid, with the fall of Troy and the doomed love of Dido and Aeneas. Deborah Voigt and Lorraine Hunt Lieberson, in the roles of Cassandra and Dido, respectively, and Ben Heppner lead an impressive cast that also includes Dwayne Croft, Robert Lloyd, Elena Zaremba, and Matthew Polenzani. Francesca Zambello refashions the composer's elaborate mise en scène of warriors, palaces, gods, and nymphs, with Maria Bjørnson and Anita Yavich providing the sets and costumes; the composer's magical orchestration lies in the capable hands of James Levine. (Feb. 10 at 6.) (Metropolitan Opera House. 212-362-6000.)

PICCOLO TEATRO DELL'OPERA
Singers from the diminutive Brooklyn-based company provide a rare opportunity to hear arias and duets from **"Treemonisha,"** Scott Joplin's only surviving opera—a powerful story about former slaves on an abandoned plantation. The score, laced with a winsome, Weber-like innocence, brings ragtime to its height. (Brooklyn Museum of Art, Eastern Parkway. Feb. 8 at 4. Attendance is free with museum admission.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

ST. OLAF COLLEGE BAND
World premières of works by Libby Larsen and Mary Ellen Childs—two tireless Midwest innovators—highlight a program by one of America's preëminent bands, which also includes nuggets by Strauss and Saint-Saëns. (Alice Tully Hall. 212-721-6500. Feb. 5 at 8.)

CLEVELAND ORCHESTRA
In Franz Welser-Möst, a forty-two-year-old Austrian maestro, this magnificent orchestra has a new conductor who is as interested in the music of his time as he is devoted to preserving the fine balance between European elegance and American power that gives the group its soul. He begins the final installment of his first concert series at Carnegie Hall with the New York première of "Orion," by Kaija Saariaho, a composer who excels at handling sensuous orchestral colors with an economical restraint—attributes that could also apply to the Mahler Seventh, the most cerebral and refined of the composer's symphonies. (Feb. 6 at 8.) ♦ Note: Carnegie will also present a program of Saariaho's chamber music at Weill Hall, with some of New York's finer new-music stalwarts (such as the pianist Marilyn Nonken and the percussionist Steven Schick) performing a concert of vocal and instrumental works (including several premières). (Feb. 5 at 7:30.) (212-247-7800.)

NEW YORK COLLEGIUM
Andrew Parrott leads his group of singers and players in "A Portrait of Rameau," a program that includes excerpts from such works as "Zaïs" and "Hippolyte et Aricie" (featuring the baritone Thomas Meglioranza, the bass Curtis Streetman, and other vocal soloists). (Society for Ethical Culture, 2 W. 64th St. 212-717-9246. Feb. 7 at 8.)

RIVERSIDE SYMPHONY
The conductor George Rothman's current season is a mix of the sumptuous and the severe—masterpieces of the Russo-French tradition lying alongside Germanic music of a more intellectually rigorous stripe. The American première of Detlev Müller-Siemens's Viola Concerto (with Paul Neubauer), a Miles Davis-influenced work first performed by the Berlin Philharmonic in 1984, is the highlight of a program that also features music by Busoni (including the "Berceuse Élégiaque") and Ravel ("Une Barque sur l'Océan" and Marius Constant's orchestration of "Gaspard de la Nuit"). (Alice Tully Hall. 212-721-6500. Feb. 8 at 8.)

AMERICAN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
Leon Botstein conducts a concert of music inspired by the poetry and person of Lord Byron, including (as is his fashion) works both famous and obscure—Sterndale Bennett's "Parisina," Liszt's "Tasso," and Schumann's brooding and beautiful oratorio "Manfred." The Concert Chorale of New York assists; Barbara Sukova, John Kuether, and Kevin Burdette are among the vocal soloists. (Avery Fisher Hall. 212-868-9276. Feb. 9 at 3.)

MUSIC BEFORE 1800 SERIES:
CHOIR OF CORPUS CHRISTI CHURCH
The choir, along with the strings-and-organ trio Teares of the Muses, performs in a program contrasting the profoundly spiritual (and stylistically conservative) vocal music of William Byrd (including the Mass for Five Voices) with two fanciful and decidedly progressive instrumental works by William Lawes and his mentor John Coprario. (Corpus Christi Church, 529 W. 121st St. 212-666-9266. Feb. 9 at 4.)

CHOIR OF ST. IGNATIUS LOYOLA
Kent Tritle and Aaron Smith conduct "From Mourning to Joy," a program of classic and contemporary a-cappella works by such composers as Poulenc, Gabrieli, Thompson, and James Bassi, with the assistance of Equal Voices and the American Boychoir. (Feb. 11 at 8.) ♦ Note: At 6:30, David Del Tredici introduces a pre-concert recital presented by the Estate Project for Artists with AIDS, featuring chamber works by C. Bryon Rulon, the late composers Calvin Hampton and Robert Savage, and others. (Church of St. Ignatius Loyola, Park Ave. at 84th St. 212-288-2520.)

PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA
Wolfgang Sawallisch conducts music by Mendelssohn and Schumann (including the Piano Concerto in A Minor, with Rudolf Buchbinder). (Carnegie Hall. 212-247-7800. Feb. 11 at 8.)

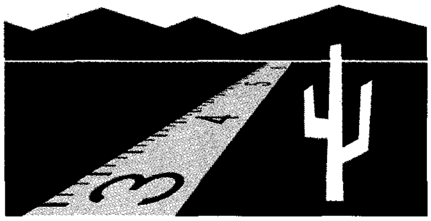
RECITALS

BARGEMUSIC
Feb. 6-7 at 7:30: Mark Peskanov, Toby Hoffman, and Jan Vogler offer an evening of string trios by Schubert and Beethoven (the Trio in E-Flat Major, Op. 3), along with a solo cello suite by Reger. ♦ Feb.

BOOK CURRENTS

This Land Is Your Land

In 1785, Thomas Hutchins, the first Geographer of the United States, began the improbable task of literally measuring the expanding new nation, yard by yard. Inching west from the Pennsylvania-Ohio border, and equipped with Gunter's chain—a handy surveying device stretching exactly twenty-two yards long—Hutchins' crew chopped the tangled frontier into Enlightenment-friendly six-mile-by-six-mile townships, the effect of which can still be seen from any airplane window. **MEASURING AMERICA** (Walker), by the British journalist Andro Linklater, tells the eye-opening story of how this "immaculate" grid gave birth to the radical notion of fixed measures (the variable cooms, kilderkins, and rundlets quickly went out the window), the uniquely American idea of land ownership (yeomen farmers were drawn westward to such would-be new states as Assenisipia and Polypotamia), and our continuing anachronistic fealty to yards, acres, and miles (Thomas Jefferson proposed using a decimal system, only to be trumped by Gunter's chain).



STEPHEN SAVAGE

"The grid was to the rationalization of nature what the Declaration of Independence was to freedom," writes Case Western professor Ted Steinberg in **DOWN TO EARTH** (Oxford), a meditation on the overlooked role of nature in American history. For Steinberg, American history began 180 million years ago, when the giant landmass Pangaea broke apart, and continues through such major events as the Laramide Orogeny (which created the Great Plains), Millard Fillmore's 1850 State of the Union address (which lamented the high price of imported Peruvian guano), and the proliferation of the boll weevil (which may have spurred the exodus of black Americans to the North).

—Mark Rozzo

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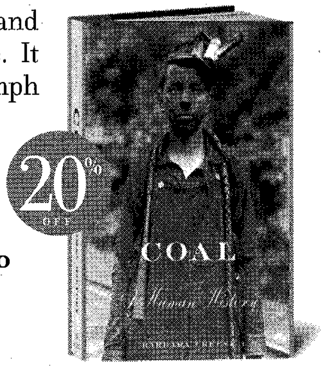
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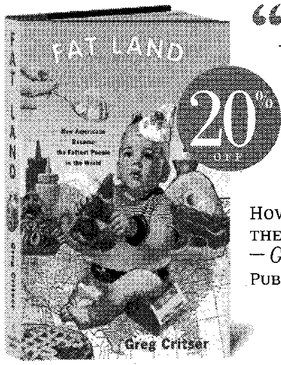
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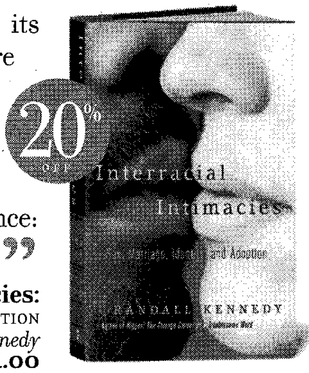
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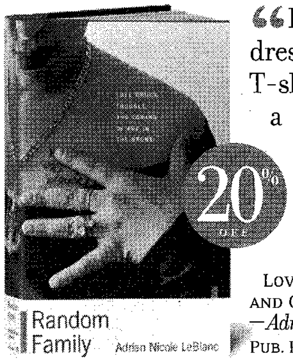
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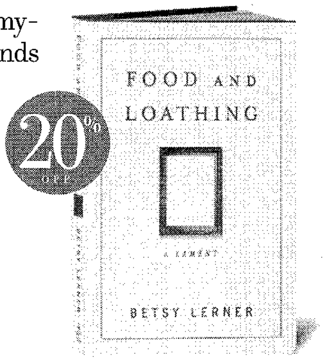
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8 at 7:30 and Feb. 9 at 4: The pianist Rieko Aizawa joins the strings in works by Mozart, Schumann, and Dvořák (the Piano Quartet No. 2 in E-Flat Major) and plays a solo as well (Takemitsu's sweet and haunting "Rain Tree Sketch #2," a memorial to Messiaen). (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 718-624-2083.)

JOEL KROSNICK AND GILBERT KALISH

Gunther Schuller's Duo Concertante receives its world première in a concert by the Juilliard String Quartet's cellist and the pianist, who also perform music by Poulenc, Robert Stern, and Richard Wernick (a New York première). (Paul Hall, Juilliard School, 60 Lincoln Center Plaza. Feb. 6 at 8. For information about free tickets, which are required, call 212-769-7406.)

"SOLO FLIGHTS: KEYBOARD SUMMIT"

Frederic Rzewski, the politically and musically rebellious American composer who has long lived in Brussels, makes a two-week stopover in New York to perform the première of his eight-hour "novel for the piano," "The Road." Spread out over six nights, the work is the culmination of nearly a decade of effort and resounds with whistles, singing, and a driving dynamism—it can shift from angular to lyrical in barely a bar. (The first three concerts span Parts I-V.) Rzewski shares the bill with six very different (though all spiritually sympathetic) guest pianists, including the new-music specialist Kathleen Supové and the jazz-inclined Arturo O'Farrill and Matthew Shipp. But it is Rzewski himself—a brilliant and wonderfully gritty performer—who makes these concerts essential. (The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. 212-255-5793. Feb. 6-8 at 8. Through Feb. 16.)

NEW YORK FESTIVAL OF SONG: "SONS AND BROTHERS"

A newly commissioned cycle from Robert Beaser is the highlight of a concert devoted to the joys and difficulties of male relationships; the program also includes music by Britten ("Abraham and Isaac"), Loewe ("Erlkönig," a setting of the same poem Schubert used), Ives, Rorem ("Abel"), Bolcom, and Wolf ("Ganymed"). The singers are William Ferguson, John Hancock, and Jennifer Dudley; Michael Barrett and Steven Blier accompany them. (Weill Recital Hall, Carnegie Hall. 646-230-8380. Feb. 6 at 8.)

ETHEL: THE STRING QUARTETS OF JULIA WOLFE AND JOHN ZORN

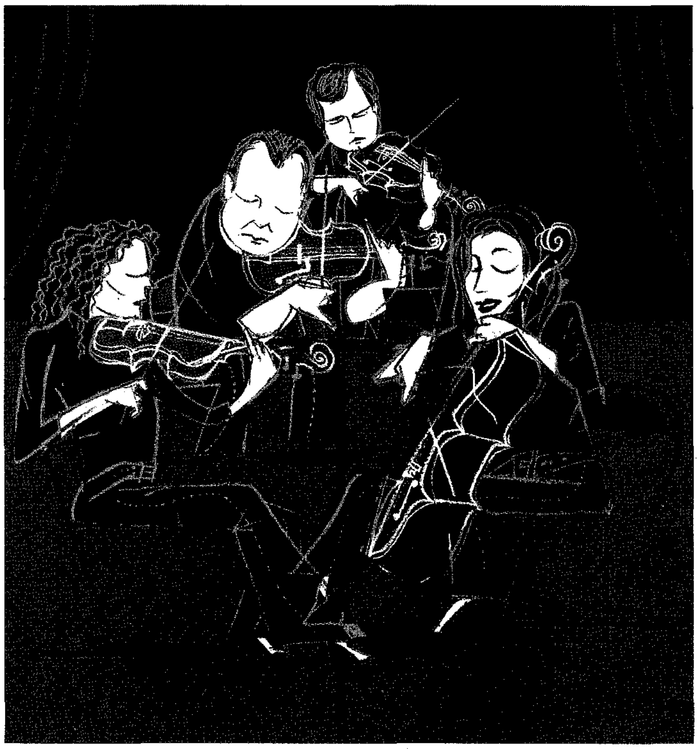
Ethel, downtown's hippest string quartet, has combined the catholic taste and cool attitude of its great model, the Kronos Quartet, with a more refulgent sound—and the stylistic adaptability that comes from these players' long experience as gigging New York pros. So they're just the right group to take on the complete quartets (so far) of Wolfe and Zorn in this, the first of a three-concert series. (Her work is rock-based down to its roots, yet glows with minimalist calm; his cultivates a forbidding sense of mystery from a dizzying range of influences.) Ethel is also using these concerts to promote music by other composers—such as John King, whose work "AllSteel" will be premièred here. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 212-854-7799. Feb. 6 at 8.)

AMERICAN FESTIVAL OF MICROTONAL MUSIC

In the first of an extensive series of concerts, the renegade composer-bassoonist Johnny Reinhard is joined by Ensemble Subtilior, the violist Tom Chiu, and others for a program featuring music by Gerard Grisey, Sven-David Sandström, and the irrepressible Reinhard himself (who will provide some onstage comedy to boot). (Washington Square United Methodist Church, 135 W. 4th St. Feb. 8 at 8. Tickets at the door.)

EMERSON STRING QUARTET: "TEXT/SUBTEXT"

A sense of narrative drive underpins any great performance of the Western classics—something well known to the Emerson, who have given more than their fair share. In the first of two concerts the group offers a program that brings the links between literature and music to the surface, featuring program music (Smetana's "From My Life" Quartet) as well as songs (Barber's setting of Matthew Arnold's "Dover Beach"). The baritone Thomas Hampson also sings Schubert's song "Death and the Maiden"; the concert concludes with Schubert's Quartet in D Minor, which absorbs that same song into its marrow. (Carnegie Hall. 212-247-7800. Feb. 8 at 7:30.)



Ethel, downtown's reigning string quartet, begins a series of concerts devoted to the quartets of Julia Wolfe and John Zorn on February 6.

EDWIN FOTHERINGHAM

MUSIC OF HUANG RUO

Miller Theatre offers Ruo, twenty-six and the winner of a freshly minted ASCAP young composers' prize, a concert of his own. He conducts the International Contemporary Ensemble (a group of up-and-comers from Oberlin and Juilliard) in several of his own works. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 212-854-7799. Feb. 8 at 8.)

"MUSIC FROM JAPAN" CONCERTS

This invaluable series, now in its twenty-eighth season, gives New York listeners a window on a musical culture at once deeply traditional and progressive. Feb. 8 at 8: The renowned Keiko Nosaka, who performs on a twenty-five-string koto of her own invention, plays pieces by Ifukube ("Ballata Simfonica") and Hirose, as well as music of her own. ♦ Feb. 9 at 2: A worthy band of new-music locals (including the cellist Fred Sherry and the pianist Stephan Gosling) plays pieces by six young Japanese composers. Julia Wolfe and Kyle Gann host a post-concert discussion. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 212-501-3330.)

HEIDI GRANT MURPHY

Murphy, whose radiant light soprano and sophisticated musicality were such a boon to the Met's recent production of "Dialogues des Carmélites," offers a wide-ranging recital that spans the distance between Schubert and Stravinsky (the beguiling "Pastorale") to Rodgers and Hart and Harold Rome. Kevin Murphy, her husband, accompanies her. (Alice Tully Hall. 212-721-6500. Feb. 9 at 5.)

PAAVALI JUMPPANEN

The young Finnish pianist, the winner of the 2000 Young Concert Artists International Auditions, performs an ensemble concert of Janáček, Boulez (the First Piano Sonata), Liszt, and Ravel (the Piano Trio), with the assistance of the violinist Scott St. John and the cellist Carter Brey. (Weill Recital Hall, Carnegie Hall. 212-307-6656. Feb. 10 at 7.)

JUILLIARD STRING QUARTET

The world première of the Quartet No. 4 by Gunther Schuller, an old friend of the ensemble who is enjoying two performances from its members this week, highlights a program that also features works by Mozart (the "Hunt" Quartet) and Beethoven. The piece is dedicated to the memory of Felix Galimir (1910-99), the uncompromising violinist who was one of the Juilliard School's most revered professors. (Alice Tully Hall. Feb. 11 at 8. For free tickets, which are required, call 212-769-7406.)

CONTINUUM

The Stefan Wolpe centennial celebrations continue with a concert by this superb new-music ensemble, which combines performances of his music (including "Form IV" for piano) along with several works by Ursula Mamlok, who turns seventy-five this month. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 212-501-3330. Feb. 11 at 8.)

ABOVE AND BEYOND

WESTMINSTER KENNEL CLUB DOG SHOW

The hundred-and-twenty-seventh annual competition features championship dogs from forty-nine states (none from Alaska; those dogs must be working at this time of year), all vying for the coveted distinction Best in Show. The contestants have long, elaborate names (forget the homespun simplicity of Buddy, Sparky, or Lucky). For example, last year a miniature poodle called Surrey Spice Girl captured the top prize, while dogs named Bayshore Cruis'n the Casbar, Foxlor Shafrhaus Sammy Sosa, Homesteader's Summertime Reign, and Wetu of Kalahari took home honors in the Toy, Herding, Sporting, and Hound groups, respectively. (Madison Square Garden. 212-307-7171. Feb. 10-11, beginning at 9 A.M. For more information, visit www.westminsterkennelclub.org.)

READINGS

Feb. 5 at 7: Paula Fox, Rachel Hadas, Siri Hustvedt, and other writers celebrate the latest edition of the literary magazine *Pequod.* (Village Community School, 272 W. 10th St. For more information, call 212-255-7075.) ♦ Feb. 6 at 6:30: Pico Iyer reads from and discusses his latest novel, "Abandon." (Asia Society, Park Ave. at 70th St. 212-327-9276.) ♦ Feb. 6 at 7:30: Luc Sante, Paul Auster, Tory Dent, and many other friends and admirers of Kenneth Koch pay tribute to the late poet with a reading of his work. (Graduate Student Lounge, Philosophy Hall, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. No tickets necessary.)

TALKS

Feb. 5 at 8: The punk poet Henry Rollins stops by on a spoken-word tour. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 212-840-2824.) ♦ Feb. 5 at 8: The "Little Gray Book" lecture series returns, featuring, among others, the mixologist Dale DeGroff (on how to make a new cocktail called the Werthmann, which is named for the actress Colleen Werthmann), the writer Adam Rapoport (on Brillat-Savarin, the cheese), the novelist Samantha Hunt (on Tesla, the band, the scientist, and the unit of magnetic density). (Galapagos, 70 North 6th St., Williamsburg, Brooklyn. 718-782-5188.) ♦ Feb. 11 at 6:30: The translator Robert Fagles talks about and offers passages from Homer's Odyssey. (Wollman Auditorium, Cooper Union, 51 Astor Pl. No tickets necessary.)

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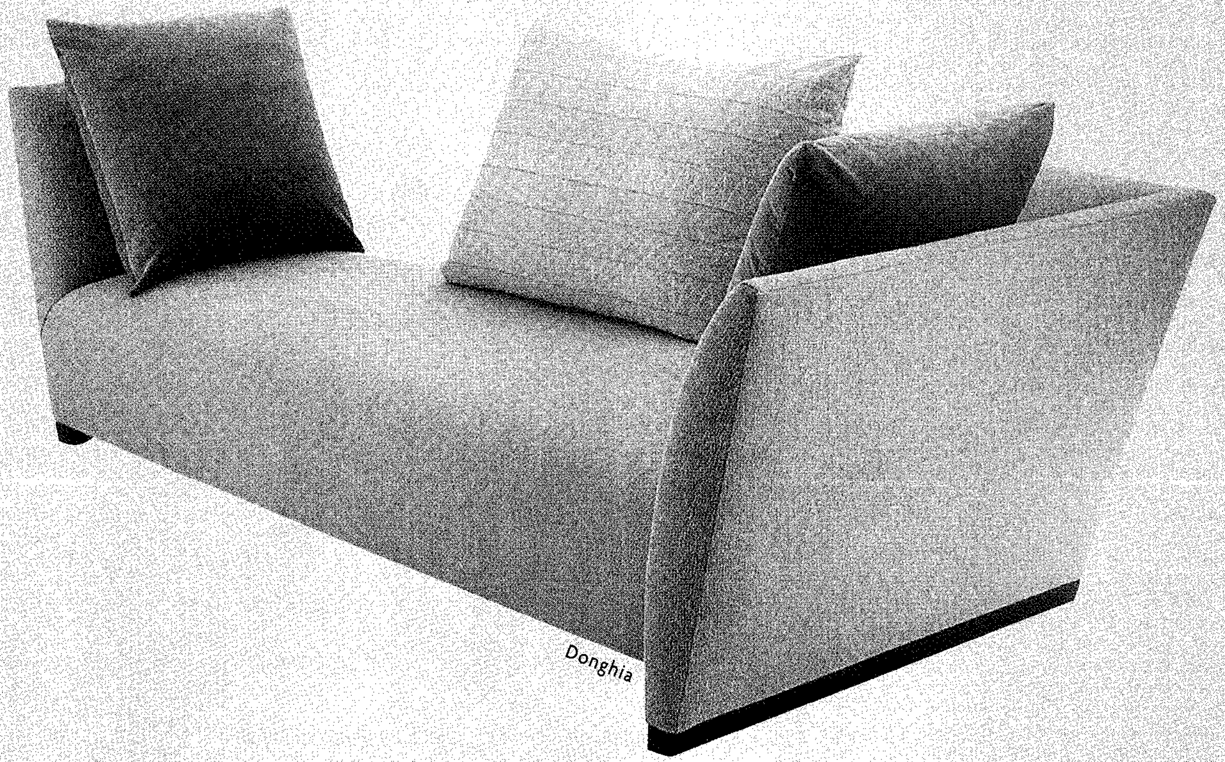

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MOVIES OPENING

DELIVER US FROM EVA
Gary Hardwick directed this comedy in which a group of brothers-in-law hire a ladies' man (LL Cool J) to woo their perfectionist sister-in-law (Gabrielle Union). Opening Feb. 7.

HOW TO LOSE A GUY IN TEN DAYS
A romantic drama with Kate Hudson and Matthew McConaughey, directed by Donald Petrie ("Miss Congeniality"). Opening Feb. 7.

SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
Jackie Chan and Owen Wilson team up in a kung-fu comedy sequel to "Shanghai Noon." Opening Feb. 7.

ZUS & ZO
Three sisters try to prevent their gay brother from inheriting the family's seaside vacation home, in a drama directed by Paula Van der Oest. In Dutch. Opening Feb. 7. (Quad Cinema.)

FILM NOTES

ABOUT SCHMIDT
Alexander Payne's last movie, "Election," was unpleasant, timely, and as sharp as a nib. His new movie is unpleasant, indecisive, and about as cheering as a damp fog. Jack Nicholson plays the eponymous Schmidt, who leaves a long career in insurance and slumps into graceless retirement. His wife (June Squibb) dies, whereupon his daughter (Hope Davis) takes over the household; soon enough, the aging male is left alone, and we are left to ponder the mismatch—unresolved by Payne—between Schmidt the early fusspot and Schmidt the emerging slob, with a riot of used food packaging at his feet. After that, the movie takes to the road, like a late, soft aftermath to "Five Easy Pieces." The Nicholson of that film made hard choices, but here he plays to the viewers' cultish worship of Jack the Lad, and even the saddest scenes have flourishes of rumpled clowning. A picture that aimed to celebrate a regular guy winds up endorsing his comic disdain for the stale lives around him. With Dermot Mulroney, Kathy Bates, and a hot tub that has seen it all.—*Anthony Lane* (Reviewed in our issue of 12/16/02.) (BAM Rose Cinemas, Battery Park 16, Chelsea Cinemas, Cinema 1, East 86th Street Cinemas, Empire 25, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, 34th Street Theatre, and Union Square.)

ANTWONE FISHER
"Oprah" for men. Fisher's horrific childhood—he was abandoned by his mother and then sexually molested in his Cleveland foster home—gets the full Hollywood treatment in Denzel Washington's directorial début. The self-congratulatory autobiographical script, written by Fisher, concentrates on his relationship with a psychologist (played by Washington) who provides him with the key to conquering his past. Derek Luke, as the title character, and Joy Bryant, as his love interest, give performances that raise the film above its inspirational message, but just barely. Washington directs in his own image—the movie is sturdy and handsomely made, but lacks grit and complexity.—*Bruce Diones* (Beekman, Chelsea West, Empire 25, Kips Bay Theatre, 62nd & Broadway, and Union Square.)

TICKETS
FILM COMMENT
I ♥

A buff's delight: the "Film Comment Selects" series at Walter Reade Theatre, featuring unreleased and unfairly neglected movies.

DOUG ALLEN

BLIND SPOT: HITLER'S SECRETARY
Traudl Junge started working for Hitler in 1942 when she was twenty-two years old. She took dictation and typed his private communiqués, and was one of the few people to survive the final days in the Berlin bunker. After the war, she kept herself and her story out of sight until two Austrian filmmakers, André Heller and Othmar Schmiderer, interviewed her two years ago, shortly before her death. The film is just Frau Junge and the camera, unadorned with newsreel footage, still photography, or even a fade. The starkness is deliberate: there's nothing to cushion us from taking the measure of this dignified, carefully spoken old woman who worked next to Hitler, admiring him as a father figure while remaining unaware of the concentration camps. In German.—*Michael Agger* (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

LE CERCLE ROUGE
In this de-luxe piece of heist-film engineering from 1970, the writer-director Jean-Pierre Melville provides a satisfying payoff for the audience, if not the characters—according to the hardboiled karma of the plot, everyone winds up philosophical or dead. Just released ex-con Alain Delon and escaped prisoner Gian-Maria Volonté take turns saving each other's life and then enlist marksman Yves Montand to help them pull off a Paris jewelry-store robbery. Bourvil is the inspector on their trail, and François Périer the well-connected owner of an irresistible gangland night club. Volonté's juicy wildness as a self-proclaimed "amateur" and Montand's blowsy authority as an alcoholic help lubricate the plot. And with the help of the cinematographer Henri Decaë, Melville puts on a virtuoso display of movie-action geometry, from the red circle of chalk Delon uses on a pool cue to the slashing lines he cuts in his blocky American car. In French.—*Michael Sragow* (Film Forum.)

CHICAGO
The time is the nineteen-twenties, but the setting is so stylized, so shamelessly grounded in a hundred other shows and films, that "Chicago" barely qualifies as a period piece; indeed, it merrily jabs at the celebrity-lust of our own era. Catherine Zeta-Jones is Velma Kelly, and Renée Zellweger is Roxie Hart. Each is a man-killer, and each resides in jail, plotting her defense with the silken legal help of Billy Flynn (Richard Gere). The music and lyrics by Kander and Ebb operate on the old-fashioned principle that every song should be a showstopper, regardless of whether the show should be stopped. The director, Rob Marshall, cuts away furiously during every song, and this chronic wish to glance aside makes us wonder: could the performers not weather the camera's unstinting gaze? The only player to conquer the movie is Zeta-Jones, who gets by on a full tank of unleaded oomph. The film has punch, but it never really conveys the delicious, redeeming sense that life can be lived on the hoof.—*A.L.* (1/6/03) (84th Street Sixplex, 42nd Street E Walk, Union Square, and Ziegfeld.)

CITY OF GOD
Just how far into your face can a movie get? This one has every intention of leaving you scalded and bruised. Set in Rio de Janeiro, it was directed by Fernando Meirelles, who tries every trick known to cameramen: freeze frames, whip pans, multiple dissolves, slow motion, double motion, any kind of motion. The object is to keep pace with his characters, the young and dispossessed of the Brazilian slums. The movie hastens roughly from the nineteen-sixties to the eighties, as we watch the boys either die or grow old before their time. The result is a jolting ride, but such is the skill on show that we run the risk of being too exhilarated to notice every death; does the film convince in its plea for the forgotten poor, or are we encouraged to forget them as they fall? In Portuguese.—*A.L.* (1/20/03) (Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Square.)

CONFESSIONS OF A DANGEROUS MIND
Just as audiences are recovering from "Adaptation," here comes another Charlie Kaufman script. George Clooney directed, but this project is pure Kaufman: fact and fiction tossed in the blender together, with plenty of formal trickery. The story, or more precisely, the leaping-off point, is the autobiography of Chuck Barris, the producer who invented "The Dating Game," "The Newlywed Game," and "The Gong Show," which he also hosted. Then, there is this small matter of political assassinations: Barris claimed to be a C.I.A. hit man, tapped for various "wet" operations throughout his television career. Sam Rockwell plays Barris as a carnal, slightly crazed man who's also deeply insecure that he'll be remembered as a purveyor of trash. Is this what tipped him into his fantasy life? This nimble and free-spirited film doesn't say; it continually shifts perspective and plays with the mystery. In the end, it's a story of wayward ambition and an object lesson in what people will do when placed in front of a television camera. With Drew Barrymore and Julia Roberts as the duelling women in Barris's life.—*M.A.* (Battery Park 16, Chelsea Cinemas, East 86th Street Cinemas, Empire 25, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, 34th Street Theatre, and Union Square.)

DIVINE INTERVENTION
A strange, disconnected sampler of gags, semi-stories, and outright fantasy. Still, as the director Elia Suleiman might point out, we live in peculiar times, and cinema should rise to the occasion. Suleiman is Palestinian—nobody else would conceive of a sequence in which a balloon bearing the face of Yasir Arafat drifts over an Israeli checkpoint—and his work takes both root and flight in the Occupied Territories. Insofar as there is a plot, it centers on a gloomy fellow, played by Suleiman himself, who has a harassed father (Nayef Fahoum Daher) and a disarmingly beautiful beloved

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(Manal Khader). Most of their interaction is performed in near-silence, with occasional rushes of music. Somehow, out of the unpromising material of small, disturbed lives, Suleiman has made a bone-dry comedy dedicated to the precarious border between the hapless and the hopeless. Imagine Monsieur Hulot unleashed upon Jerusalem and you will not be far off. If only Suleiman could have resisted the charms of silliness in his climactic sequence—one of those kung-fu disco mystical terrorist shoot-outs. Aren't they always a drag? In Arabic and Hebrew.—*A.L.* (1/20/03) (Angelika Film Center and Kew Gardens Cinema.)

GANGS OF NEW YORK
Daniel Day-Lewis, returning to movies after a spell of shoemaking in Florence, disports himself with royal assurance as the voluble thug William Cutting (Bill the Butcher) in Martin Scorsese's generally unsuccessful epic about nineteenth-century gang life in New York. Wielding knife and cleaver, Day-Lewis does what he can to give this semi-coherent production some theatrical panache, but Scorsese and his screenwriters never succeed in linking together the intimate personal dramas and the endless gang war between the nativist Yankees (i.e., Protestants) and the new waves of Irish immigrants. The movie isn't boring, but it's heavy-spirited, obvious, and grisly, with an emphasis on knives and blood that borders on the fetishistic. With a sullen, stolid Leonardo DiCaprio as a young Irish immigrant eager to avenge the death of his father, Cameron Diaz as a prostitute and pickpocket, Liam Neeson as a fallen Irish leader, and Jim Broadbent as the corrupt political boss William Tweed.—*David Denby* (12/23 & 30/02) (Battery Park 16, Cinema 2, Empire 25, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, 34th Street Theatre, and Village Theatre VII.)

THE GURU
Daisy von Scherler Mayer's film stars Jimi Mistry as a young Indian who comes to New York in search of his fortune and stumbles into the sex industry, first as a hopeless stud in a porno flick, then as a modish spiritual advisor, offering hope to the ungratified loins of high society. All this makes for a promising culture clash, but somehow the movie contrives to miss every target in sight, and ends up in an even denser cloud of unknowing than its discomfited hero. The Indian characters are coarsened and patronized, while the credulity of the sage's clients—a subject worth mocking—is merely pecked at with fainthearted gags. Redemption takes the form of Heather Graham, who plainly enjoys her stint as a bondage goddess, and of Marisa Tomei, whose timing is pointed enough to extract something, at least, from the role of a randy dope.—*A.L.* (2/3/03) (Beekman, Empire 25, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, and Village Theatre VII.)

HEAVENS ABOVE!
John and Roy Boulting's satires never achieved the respect they deserve, but they provided Peter Sellers with terrific opportunities for Dickensian caricature—including his superb turn in this 1963 film as an idealistic prison chaplain reassigned to a prosperous town where the main product is a pill called Tranquilax, a combination sedative, stimulant, and laxative. When Sellers tries to reintroduce the precepts of the original Trinity (i.e. God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit), he upsets the decorous snobbery of the gentry and the material interests of the capitalists, squatters, shopkeepers, and workers; he also exposes the venality of the rest of the clergy. The crackerjack supporting cast includes Cecil Parker, Bernard Miles, Isabel Jeans, and Brock Peters.—*M.S.* (Film Forum; Feb. 10.)

THE HOURS
It has to overcome an over-all morbidity, a fractured time sequence, and Philip Glass's intrusive, chiming score, and, amazingly, it does. Stephen Daldry directed this adaptation of Michael Cunningham's prize-winning 1998 novel, from a script by David Hare. They've fashioned a lovely, serious work—as good as any recent "literary" movie—devoted to two themes, the variety of human bonds, especially the bond of love, and the gift that the dying make to the living. Nicole Kidman gives a revelatory performance as Virginia Woolf, both in 1923, at the time of writing "Mrs. Dalloway," and in 1941, when she loaded her coat with stones and walked into a river. Julianne Moore is a depressed Los Angeles housewife in 1951, and Meryl Streep plays a contemporary New York literary editor who hopes to give a party for a poet friend (Ed Harris) dying of AIDS. The widely separated episodes fit together as surely and lightly as dancers in a Balanchine ballet.—*D.D.* (12/23 & 30/02) (BAM Rose Cinemas, Battery Park 16, Chelsea Cinemas, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, 72nd Street East, 34th Street Theatre, and Union Square.)

At Film Forum, a two-week retrospective of Peter Sellers films.

ROBERT RISKO

LOST IN LA MANCHA
This documentary, directed by Louis Pepe and Keith Fulton, offers a new twist on the age-old pleasure of watching somebody truly and sumptuously screw up. Better still, none of it is his fault. The twist is that the fall guy, in this instance, is as playful and amenable a figure as exists in modern filmmaking: Terry Gilliam, who made his name with "Monty Python's Flying Circus" and subsequently at the helm of movies such as "Brazil," "The Fisher King," and "Twelve Monkeys." Now he tries to heave into motion a great hulking beast of a project, his long-pondered adaptation of "Don Quixote." Everything that can go wrong goes wrong, graced by a few extra glitches that even the most capricious of gods would not have dared to arrange. The combination of a Don (Jean Rochefort) so sick that he cannot dismount from his horse, Spanish weather of Biblical ferocity, and NATO jets roaring over the set would reduce most directors to despair, yet Gilliam comes up grinning. This account of his tribulations drags toward the end, but you leave with not only an admiring grasp of his Quixote-like obsession but also an absolute determination never to work in pictures. That has to be a lesson worth learning.—*A.L.* (2/3/03) (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and Sunshine Cinema.)

NARC
Of all the hard-assed, violent, grainy-looking urban thrillers to have emerged since "The French Connection," this movie is perhaps the hardest and the most turbulent—and also one of the most soulful and touching. The hero, Nick Tellis (Jason Patric), has been thrown off the force but is brought back to investigate the mysterious death of an undercover cop. Tellis teams up with the murdered

cop's partner, Henry Oak (Ray Liotta), and they pursue the loose ends of the case through the freezing streets of Detroit and into unspeakably sordid hideaways. The movie is half downbeat police procedural, half "Rashomon," half existential drama. That makes three halves, but this is an ambitious picture. The young director, Joe Carnahan, wants to impress upon us the intractability of our life on this earth. In all, the movie is a blood-soaked, hellish experience—a midnight special for lovers of a violent genre—but it has been made with a mixture of ferocity and gentleness that leaves one exhausted and at peace.—*D.D.* (1/27/03) (Battery Park 16, 84th Street Sixplex, Empire 25, Kips Bay Theatre, 19th Street East 6, 34th Street Theatre, and Village Theatre VII.)

ONLY TWO CAN PLAY
Peter Sellers brilliantly conveys the eroticized antsiness of a library clerk and drama critic living with his wife and kids in a tiny apartment in a sooty Welsh town. He brings the hum of thwarted energy to this static but droll and atmospheric 1962 comedy-drama about desire and corruption on a very small scale. Mai Zetterling plays the rich married bombshell who may alter the antihero's fate, and Richard Attenborough has an actor's holiday as a monstrous local playwright. Bryan Forbes adapted Kingsley Amis's "The Uncertain Feeling"; Sidney Gilliatt directed.—*M.S.* (Film Forum; Feb. 6.)

THE PIANIST
Roman Polanski's drama about the survival of a real-life Polish Jew, the pianist Wladyslaw Szpilman (Adrien Brody), during the grim days of the Holocaust is a movie that has been perfectly produced. The sense of scale and detail is exact, and the violence is neither exaggerated nor minimized but presented with clear-eyed accuracy. Yet this is not a work of great originality or imagination. Its protagonist lacks depth, and the theme of survival through hiding is, by its very nature, redundant. The playwright Ronald Harwood adapted the 1946 book that Szpilman wrote about his experiences without attempting to open up the hero at all. Is he ashamed, defiant, guilty? Grateful for his luck? We haven't a clue. His survival is an anomaly, a mistake, a joke—and that may be why the story appealed to Polanski. Shot largely in Warsaw.—*D.D.* (1/13/03) (East 86th Street Cinemas, Empire 25, First & 62nd Cinemas, Kew Gardens Cinema, Lincoln Square, and 19th Street East 6.)

THE QUIET AMERICAN
The second adaptation of Graham Greene's novel, and, on the whole, a more successful effort than Joseph Mankiewicz's, of 1958. Michael Caine may lack the defeated nobility that Michael Redgrave brought to the role of the hero—a British journalist named Fowler—but few can beat Caine when it comes to the sad and the seedy. What is more, he squares off beautifully against Brendan Fraser. With his fine if bumbling manners, and the earnest thickness of his spectacles, Fraser is ideal as Pyle, the young do-gooder who, almost despite himself, winds up doing harm. The two men share a love for a young Vietnamese woman (Do Hai Yen), and the director, Phillip Noyce, manages not to whack us too hard with the symbolic weight of their rivalry. Greene fans, a prickly bunch at the best of times, will pick holes in the movie, but Christopher Doyle's camera, slithering through the rooms and battlegrounds of an alluring land, takes us as close as we could wish to the heart of the matter.—*A.L.* (11/25/02) (Lincoln Square and Village Theatre VII.)

THE RECRUIT
Colin Farrell, the young Irish actor, has dark, hurting eyes, stubble on his upper lip and chin, and a slender, lithe body. He can't miss as a star, and he gives promise of knowing what he's up to as an actor. He's also the only interesting thing in "The Recruit," yet another paranoid thriller. This one is about training for the C.I.A., and it also stars Al Pacino in his domineering-satanic mode, complete with an opera-house Mephistopheles beard and glittering eyes. The Australian-born filmmaker Roger Donaldson has always been a competent director, but he doesn't have the wit to rise above a bad script, which, in this movie, leaves the unfor-

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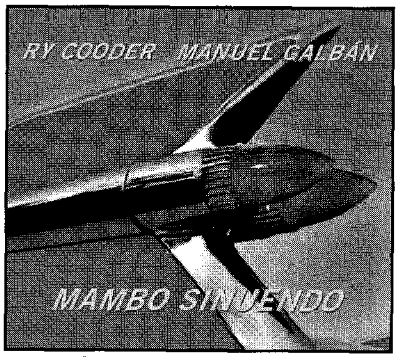

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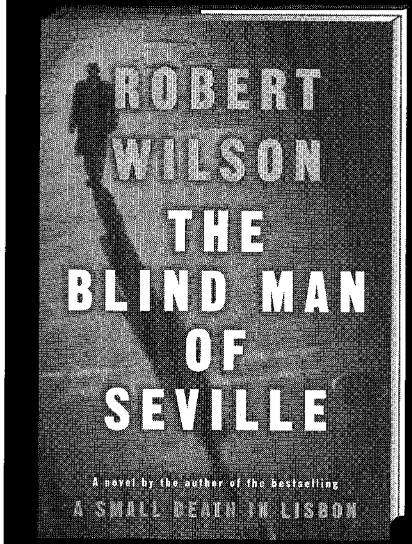

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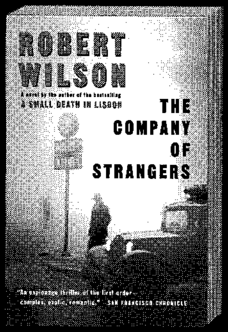
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tunate impression that the recruits are training less for intelligence work than for future appearances in action movies.—*D.D.* (1/27/03) (Battery Park 16, Cinema 1, East 86th Street Cinemas, Empire 25, Kips Bay Theatre, 19th Street East 6, 34th Street Theatre, and Village East Cinemas.)

RUSSIAN ARK
A guide to the treasures of the Hermitage, a rueful glance down the vistas of Russian history, or a show of technical prowess: take your pick. Alexander Sokurov, the creator of "Mother and Son," proves that his singular method—at once earthy and transcendent—is gaining strength and width. The new film unwinds in one take, lasting ninety-six minutes, and by some miracle we grow happily accustomed to its rhythm, like children held rapt by a bedtime story. The camera glides through galleries as if it were the eye of an invisible visitor; ahead is a black-coated stranger, who accosts passers-by and clucks tenderly, if critically, over the art. Sokurov has made not a documentary, however careful his inspection of painted surfaces, but a collection of small, sorrowful dramas—wait for the imperial children, or the blind woman caressing a marble sculpture. The effect is impenetrable, yet the film is blessed with clarity; maybe, if you spend that much time among Old Masters, they start to rub off on you. In Russian.—*A.L.* (12/16/02) (Cinema Village and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

TALK TO HER
In Pedro Almodóvar's odd but touching romantic drama, two very different men are drawn together by a common task: taking care of women who have fallen into a coma. Benigno (Javier Cámara), a shy, seemingly asexual young male nurse, looks after Alicia (Leonor Watling), a beautiful ballet dancer. Marco (Darío Grandinetti), a fortyish Argentine writer, becomes the lover of a fierce, long-waisted female bullfighter (Rosario Flores). After she is gored in the ring, she never speaks again. Both love affairs are touched by fantasy. Almodóvar's point appears to be that you can't have love without fable—that every love affair is an improbable narrative wrung from non-being and loneliness. The movie is shot in a new, subdued style for the director: past and present flow together, and everything seems touched with a melancholy magic. Two ballets by the choreographer Pina Bausch are integral to the film's themes. In Spanish.—*D.D.* (11/25/02) (BAM Rose Cinemas, Chelsea Cinemas, Kew Gardens Cinema, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, and Sunshine Cinema.)

25TH HOUR
A thirtyish drug dealer (Edward Norton) who is too smart for his situation gets pinched and sentenced to seven years in prison. His imminent departure produces a crisis in the lives of his best friends, a cynical Wall Street trader (Barry Pepper) and a schlubby private-school teacher (Philip Seymour Hoffman). The movie might be described as a turbulent elegy for the burnt-out hopes of a generation. There's a thriller plot buried in the material, but it's done half-heartedly. The glory of the movie is its talk—the profane New York verve of the three men, suffused with a post-September 11th bitterness. David Benioff adapted his own novel, and Spike Lee directed. Brian Cox plays the hero's father, and Rosario Dawson his girlfriend.—*D.D.* (1/13/03) (Battery Park 16, Empire 25, First & 62nd Cinemas, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, 34th Street Theatre, and Village Theatre VII.)

ALSO PLAYING

ADAPTATION (12/9/02)
BAM Rose Cinemas, Battery Park 16, Chelsea Cinemas, Empire 25, Kew Gardens Cinema, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, 64th and 2nd, and Sunshine Cinema.

BIKER BOYZ
Astor Plaza, Battery Park 16, 84th Street Sixplex, First & 62nd Cinemas, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, 34th Street Theatre, and Village East Cinemas.

CHAOS
Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.

FAR FROM HEAVEN (11/18/02)
Angelika Film Center, Battery Park 16, Chelsea Cinemas, Eastside Playhouse, Kew Gardens Cinema, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, and Village East Cinemas.

THE LAST LETTER
Film Forum.

THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE TWO TOWERS (1/6/03)
Battery Park 16, Chelsea Cinemas, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, Metro Twin, Orpheum VII, 64th and 2nd, 34th Street Theatre, and Union Square.

MORVERN CALLAR
Cinema Village.

RABBIT-PROOF FENCE
Empire 25, Sunshine Cinema, and Sutton 1 and 2.

THEATRE ADDRESSES

Unless noted, call 212-777-FILM for show times.

Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St.
Astor Plaza, 44th St. at Broadway.
BAM Rose Cinemas, 30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn.
Battery Park 16, West St. at Vesey St.
Beekman, Second Ave. at 66th St.
Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd St.
Chelsea West, 333 W. 23rd St.
Cinemas 1, 2, and 3, Third Ave. at 60th St.
Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th St. (212-924-3363).
East 86th Street Cinemas, Third Ave. at 86th St.
84th Street Sixplex, Broadway at 84th St.
Empire 25, on 42nd St. near Eighth Ave. (212-398-3939).
59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th St.
Film Forum, W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (212-727-8110).
First & 62nd Cinemas, 400 E. 62nd St.
42nd Street E Walk, 42nd St. near Eighth Ave.
Kew Gardens Cinema, 81-05 Lefferts Blvd., Queens (718-441-9835).
Kips Bay Theatre, Second Ave. at 32nd St.
Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, Broadway at 63rd St. (212-757-2280).
Lincoln Square, Broadway at 68th St.
Metro Twin, Broadway at 99th St.
19th Street East 6, Broadway at 19th St.
Orpheum VII, Third Ave. at 86th St.
Paris, 4 W. 58th St. (212-688-3800).
Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th St.
The Screening Room, 54 Varick St. (212-334-2100).
72nd Street East, Third Ave. at 71st St.
64th and 2nd, Second Ave. at 64th St.
62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd St.
Sunshine Cinema, 139-143 E. Houston St.
Sutton 1 and 2, Third Ave. at 57th St.
34th Street Theatre, 312 W. 34th St.
Union Square, Broadway at 13th St.
Village East Cinemas, Second Ave. at 12th St.
Village Theatre VII, Third Ave. at 11th St.
Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th St.

REVIVALS, CLASSICS, ETC.

Titles with a dagger are reviewed above.

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE
35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria (718-784-0077)—Through Feb. 16: "You Ain't Heard Nothin'," a series of films that were made in both silent and sound versions. Feb. 8 at 2: "Marianne" (1929, Robert Z. Leonard; silent). ♦ Feb. 8 at 4: "Marianne" (1929, Leonard; sound version). ♦ Feb. 9 at 2: "Broadway" (1929, Paul Fejos; silent). ♦ Feb. 9 at 4: "Broadway" (1929, Fejos; sound version). ♦ Repertory nights. Feb. 8-9 at 6:30: "In a Lonely Place" (1950, Nicholas Ray).

BAM ROSE CINEMAS
30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn (718-777-3456)—Feb. 10 at 6:30: "Breaking the Waves" (1996, Lars Von Trier); an interview with Emily Watson will follow the screening.

FILM FORUM
W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (212-727-8110)—Through Feb. 13: A Peter Sellers retrospective. Feb. 5 at 3:30 and 7:20: "I Love You, Alice B. Toklas" (1968, Hy Averback). ♦ Feb. 5 at 1:30, 5:20, and 9:10: "The World of Henry Orient" (1964, George Roy Hill). ♦ Feb. 6 at 3:50 and 7:35: "The Mouse That Roared" (1959, Jack Arnold). ♦ Feb. 6 at 1:50, 5:30, and 9:15: "Only Two Can Play" (†). ♦ Feb. 7-8 at 1:20, 5:25, and 9:35: "The Party" (1968, Blake Edwards). ♦ Feb. 7-8 at 3:15 and 7:25: "The Pink Panther" (1964, Edwards). ♦ Feb. 9 at 1:10, 4:10, and 8:10 and Feb. 10 at 1:10 and 4:10: "Lolita" (1962, Stanley Kubrick). ♦ Feb. 10 at 7: "I'm All Right, Jack" (1959, John Boulting). ♦ Feb. 10 at 9: "Heavens Above!" (†). ♦ Special event: Pre-Code Clara Bow films. Feb. 11 at 2, 5:30, and 9: "No Limit" (1931, Frank Tuttle). ♦ Feb. 11 at 3:30, 7, and 10:30: "Kick-In" (1931, Richard Wallace).

FLORENCE GOULD HALL
55 E. 59th St. (212-355-6160)—The cinematography of Raoul Coutard. Feb. 11 at 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, and 9: "Lola" (1961, Jacques Demy; in French).

GRAMERCY THEATRE
127 E. 23rd St. (212-777-4900)—Through March 3: "Twelve by Vincente Minnelli." Feb. 6 at 4: "The Bad and the Beautiful" (1952). ♦ Feb. 7 at 2:30: "The Clock" (1945). ♦ Feb. 8 at 1: "Some Came Running" (1958). ♦ Through Feb. 9: A Gus Van Sant retrospective. Each feature is accompanied by early shorts. Feb. 6 at 6:15 and Feb. 8 at 4: "Mala Noche" (1985). ♦ Feb. 6 at 8 and Feb. 9 at 2: "Drugstore Cowboy" (1989). ♦ Feb. 7 at 8:30 and Feb. 9 at 5: "To Die For" (1995). ♦ Feb. 8 at 6 and Feb. 9 at 7:30: "My Own Private Idaho" (1991). ♦ Through Feb. 20: The documentaries of Stanley Nelson. Feb. 10 at 6: "The Black Press: Soldiers Without Swords" (1998).

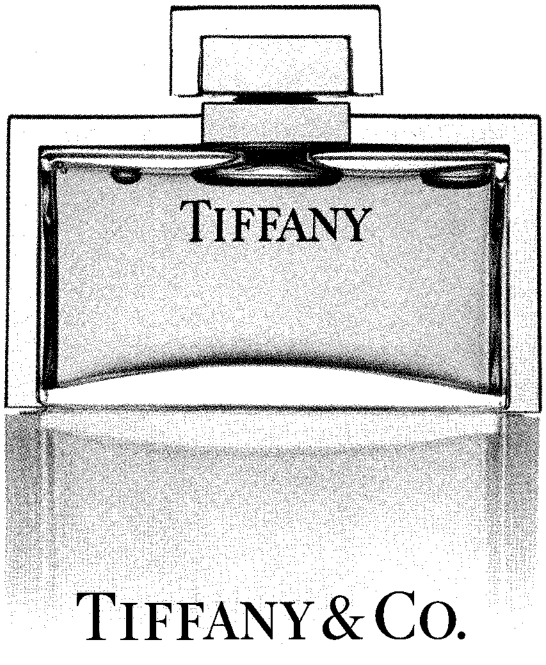
NEW-YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY
2 W. 77th St. (212-873-3400)—Friday-night movies. Feb. 7 at 6:30: "Crooklyn" (1994, Spike Lee).

PIONEER THEATRE
155 E. 3rd St. (212-254-3300)—French gangster films. Feb. 7-11: "Band of Outsiders" (1964, Jean-Luc Godard; in French).

SUNSHINE CINEMA
139-143 E. Houston St. (212-358-0573)—Midnight movies. Feb. 7-8: "Monty Python and the Holy Grail" (1975, Terry Jones and Terry Gilliam).

THALIA THEATRE
Symphony Space, 2537 Broadway, at 95th St. (212-864-5400)—"New Voices Since the Eighties." Feb. 8 at 2 and 6:30: "The Flower of My Secret" (1996, Pedro Almodóvar; in Spanish). ♦ Feb. 8 at 4 and 8:30: "All About My Mother" (1999, Almodóvar; in Spanish). ♦ Feb. 9 at 2 and 6:15: "Run Lola Run" (1998, Tom Tykwer; in German). ♦ Feb. 9 at 3:30 and 7:45: "Winter Sleepers" (1997, Tykwer; in German).

WALTER READE THEATRE
Lincoln Center (212-875-5600)—Through Feb. 14: "*Film Comment* Selects," movies chosen by the magazine's editors. Feb. 5 at 1:15: "Seafood" (2001, Wen Zhu; in Mandarin). ♦ Feb. 5 at 3:15, Feb. 6 at 1, and Feb. 11 at 6: "Path to War" (2002, John Frankenheimer). ♦ Feb. 5 at 6:30: "The Road" (2001, Darezhan Omirbaev; in Kazakh). ♦ Feb. 5 at 8:30: "Love Torn in Dream" (2000, Raoul Ruiz; in French, Portuguese, and Spanish). ♦ Feb. 6 at 4:15 and Feb. 11 at 9:10: "Seven Days in May" (1964, Frankenheimer). ♦ Feb. 7 at 1, 4:30, and 9: "The Battle of the Ten Million" (1970, Chris Marker; in French). ♦ Feb. 7 at 2:30: "Happy Here and Now" (2002, Michael Almereyda). ♦ Feb. 7 at 6:30 and Feb. 10 at 7: "The Secret Lives of Dentists" (2002, Alan Rudolph). ♦ Feb. 9 at 1:30 and Feb. 10 at 3:30: "The New Life" (2002, Philippe Grandrieux; in French). ♦ Feb. 9 at 3:45: "Demonlover" (2002, Olivier Assayas; in English, French, and Japanese). ♦ Feb. 9 at 6:30: "Remembrance of Things to Come" (2002, Chris Marker and Yannick Bellon; in French). ♦ Feb. 9 at 8:30: "Ken Park" (2002, Larry Clark and Ed Lachman). ♦ Feb. 11 at 3:30: "Blissfully Yours" (2001, Apichatpong Weerasethakul; in Thai). ♦ "Golden Silents." Feb. 8 at 4 and 8: "Master of the House" (1925, Carl Theodore Dreyer; silent).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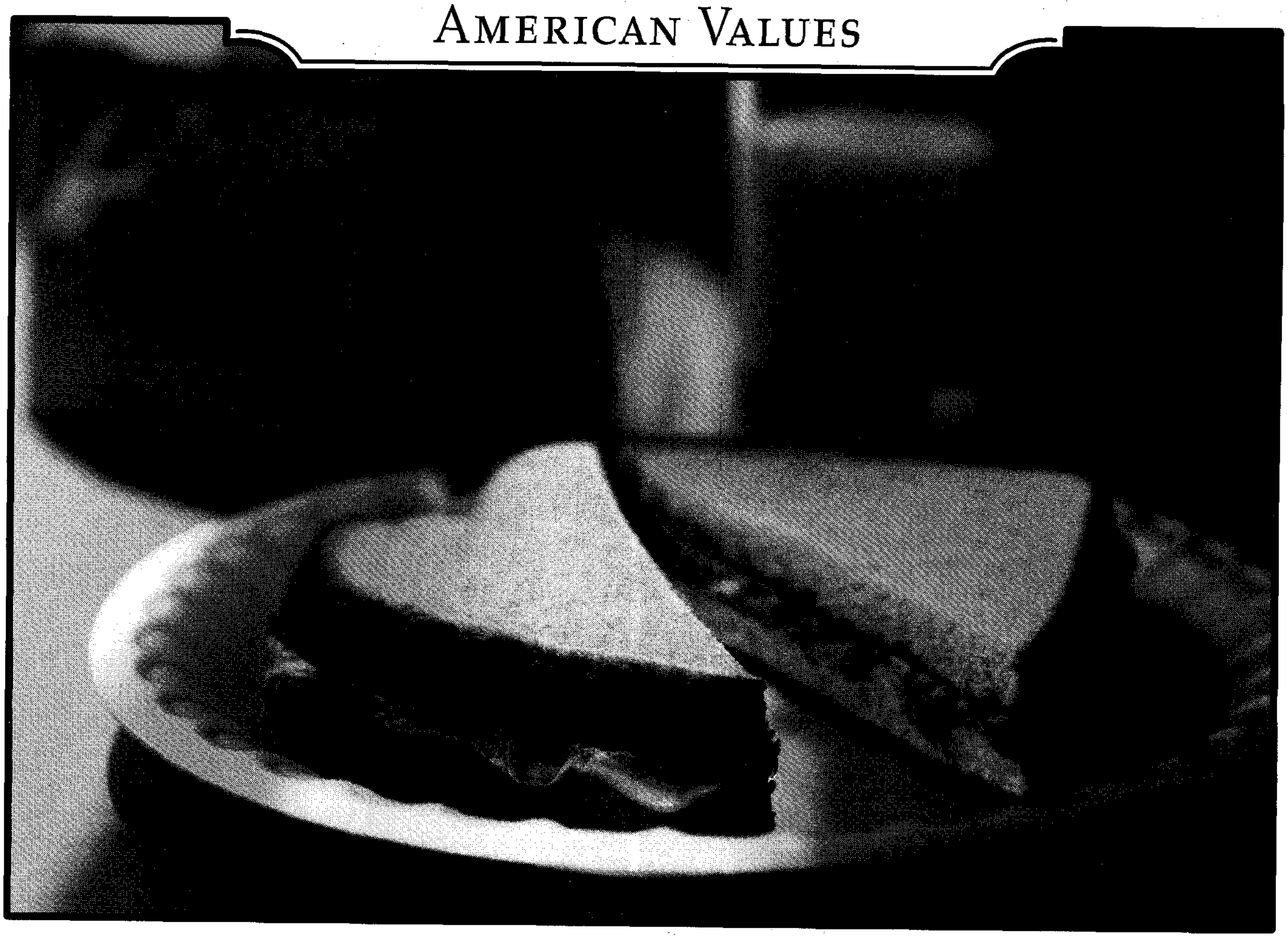
AMERICAN VALUES



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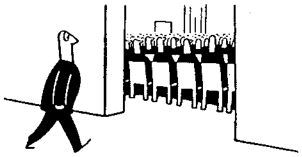
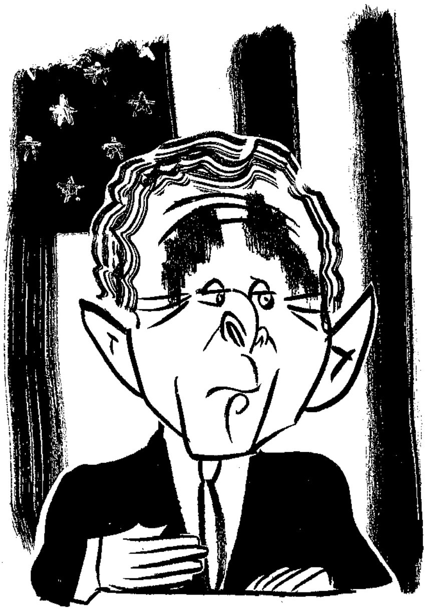


The most tasteless passage in last week's State of the Union Message came about half an hour into the speech, as President Bush was enumerating his Administration's successes against Al Qaeda. Three thousand suspected terrorists have been arrested, he said. "And many others have met a different fate," he went on. "Let's put it this way: they are no longer a problem to the United States and our friends and allies." Talk about smoking guns. You could almost see the President blowing across the upturned barrel of his Colt .45.

This was not the first Clint Eastwood moment in the history of the modern Presidency. "Go ahead—make my day," Ronald Reagan said, back in 1985. "Read my lips," added his Vice-President, George H. W. Bush, in accepting the Republican Presidential nomination in 1988. But they were merely promising to veto tax bills. Their bravado came with a twinkle. Bush the younger was talking about extrajudicial killings.

Under certain conditions—when the targets are known terrorists, arrest is not a practical option, and the risk to innocent civilians is small—such killings can be preferable to permitting escape. But for the President to boast of them so flippantly was not exactly an example of the moral clarity that is supposed to be his specialty. "They are no longer a problem." This sounded less like Reagan or Bush the elder than like—Well, let's put it this way. In a chilling account of Saddam Hussein's cruelties in the *Times* a couple of days before the speech, John F. Burns identified one of the dictator's favorite maxims: "If there is a person, then there is a problem. If there is no person, then there is no problem."

The President's swagger is the sort of thing that Europeans, especially "old" Europeans, have in mind when they grumble that our President is a callow cowboy. But the difficulty goes beyond the personality of George W. Bush. One cannot spend time in any of the other developed democracies without being struck by the damage the Administration's wise-guy unilateralism has done, not only on the issue of Iraq but also on strategically marginal topics like the Kyoto environmental agreement, family planning, and the International Criminal Court. Everyone expected this pattern to change after the attacks of September 11, 2001. It didn't. The opportunity presented by Europe's instinctive solidarity—epitomized by NATO's decision to invoke, for the first time ever, the provision of its charter declaring that an attack against one is an attack against all—has been wasted. It's only natural that Europe, absorbed in creating a continental order based on nonviolent shared sovereignty, and the United States, whose unmatched military power confers unmatched responsibility, should view the world differently. Some degree of American unilateralism is inescapable. But this Administration seldom bothers to observe the minimal decencies. Europeans remain proud of their participation in Afghanistan (just last week, Norwegian F-16s saw action in a battle against a holdout pro-Taliban warlord), but they have been steadily pushed toward seeing the struggle against terrorism as America's war, not theirs.



In the days after Bush's speech there was much discussion of whether he had "made the case." But the real question, whatever Bush says, is whether there is a case. In that connection, last week's most important speech was not the State of the Union. It was the report the day be-

ILLUSTRATIONS BY TOM BACHTELL

fore by Hans Blix, of the United Nations Monitoring, Verification, and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC), and it was not the whitewash that conservative commentators had preëmptively decided it would be. In its drip-drip-drip way, the Blix report is completely consistent with the view that the Iraqi regime is coöperating only to the minimal extent required to avoid immediate attack and that it has no intention of giving up its murderous ambitions. The closest Blix gets to a conclusion—and it may be close enough—comes in this sentence: "Unlike South Africa, which decided on its own to eliminate its nuclear weapons and welcomed inspection as a means of creating confidence in its disarmament, Iraq appears not to have come to a genuine acceptance—not even today—of the disarmament which was demanded of it and which it needs to carry out to win the confidence of the world and to live in peace." To put what Blix is saying another way, if the Iraqi regime continues to resist disarmament then it must expect war. Even if one distrusts the Bush Administration, it's hard to disagree.

It's also hard to disagree with the case for leaving the inspection regime in place for a time. As Blix reports, in two months UNMOVIC has built its staff in Iraq from zero to two hundred and sixty. It has eight helicopters and will soon have the use of unmanned aerial surveillance vehicles and U-2 aircraft. The chances of a conclusive discovery, or of a conclusive Iraqi effort to thwart one, are growing. A little more time, especially if it comes with a Security Council resolution unambiguously authorizing force if Iraq does not unambiguously disarm, would mitigate the damage to allied unity, lessen the (largely self-created) isolation of the United States, and create a basis for international burden-sharing in the rebuilding of Iraq.

The debate over Iraq has focussed almost entirely on the before and the after. What has hardly been discussed is the war itself. The Administration's hawks and the op-ed falconers say it will be short and relatively bloodless. But wars seldom unfold as planned. Twelve years ago, Saddam's forces were massed in an empty desert. Today, though weaker, they are scattered throughout a thickly populated country the size of Germany. A war plan leaked last week to David Martin, of CBS News, calls for up to eight hundred cruise-missile strikes during the first two days—twice as many as during the forty days of the Gulf War. Martin quotes a Pentagon official as saying, "There will not be a safe place in Baghdad." The plan is called "Shock and Awe," and its goal is "the psychological destruction of the enemy's will to fight." Or perhaps that is merely the goal of the leak. But any campaign is likely to begin with bombs over Baghdad. Many people will die. And if Iraq's response to the bombing of its capital city is more like London's in 1940 or Hanoi's in 1966 than like Belgrade's in 1999—if its Army's will is stiffened rather than broken—then no one can say how much suffering and death might follow.

The other day, Secretary of State Colin Powell was reminded that his boss is in bed by ten and sleeps like a baby. Powell reportedly replied, "I sleep like a baby, too—every two hours I wake up screaming." The President's serenity is more worrying than the General's anxiety is comforting. And the storm approaches.

—*Hendrik Hertzberg*

ON THE AMECHE DIAL AGAIN

Verizon has applied the branding iron, and starting this week everybody in Manhattan must punch in a 1 and then a 212 (or a 646 or 917) in front of the old local number before talking to his or her office or bookie or life companion or dog-walker or newspaper-delivery service (where was our *Post* yesterday?). It's not such a big deal—I already knew I was a 212—but eleven numbers instead of seven are now required to bring about a conversation, which means a further lowering of the gray digit cloud that hangs over each of us, Pig Pen-like, from the moment we get up in the morning to the time we brush our teeth at night. The added numbers also signal the end of my hopes that the phone company might someday see the error of its integer infatuation and turn back to the exchange letters and (before that) the sprightly full exchange names that once identified us. I've lived at the same Manhattan address for thirty years and in that span have gone from a LEhigh 4 prefix to LE 4 to 534 and now to 1-212-534, which is the wrong direction. Yes, there are zillions more number variations now available than what can be wrung out of those puny alphabet groups jammed onto your Touchtone, but let's try harder. Why not some fresh exchanges instead? Why not WEevil 3? What about OSiris 4? What's wrong with LUst 7, BOwwow 9, or LInoleum 6? The number I know best, next to my own, belongs to our friends Allan and Marie, who have converted their drab, Upper West Side 496-5844 into the mnemonic GYM LUGG.

I'm an old New York guy, and can recall the day in 1930 when our Atwater 8435 took an extra digit and became ATwater 9-8435. Growing up, I began to apprehend that Manhattan telephone exchanges, which were geographically assigned, were a guide map and social register to my delightful city. West Side school friends of mine could be reached at the MOnument or CAthedral or RIverside exchange. My father worked at the WHitehall exchange, down near Wall Street, and my mother at the mid-West Forties' BRyant 9. BUtterfield 8 was just south of us on the Upper East Side, with TRafalgar, REgent, and RHinelander not far away. When my parents were divorced and my mother moved to East Eighth Street, she became a SPring 7, and neighbors and stores and movie theatres in that neighborhood had lively ALgonquin, CHelsea, and WAtkins handles. If you called up one of the Times Square movie theatres, to find the next showtime for "Cimarron" or "Rasputin and the Empress," the exchange was probably LOngacre. In my early teens, I was in love with a girl named Rosie, who lived a dozen blocks away, and we passed endless, almost wordless half hours together on the phone, ATwater and ENdicott breathing as one, until the inexorable "Oop, my dad—bye."

Folks all over New York (and all over the country) have similar names and allusions deep inside them, and once sensed the social significance of a nice exchange number. Bruce, a colleague of mine, grew up in the Grand Concourse area of the Bronx, with a home WEllington 5 exchange that wasn't as tony, he says, as BAinbridge, over near Mosholu Parkoneworld

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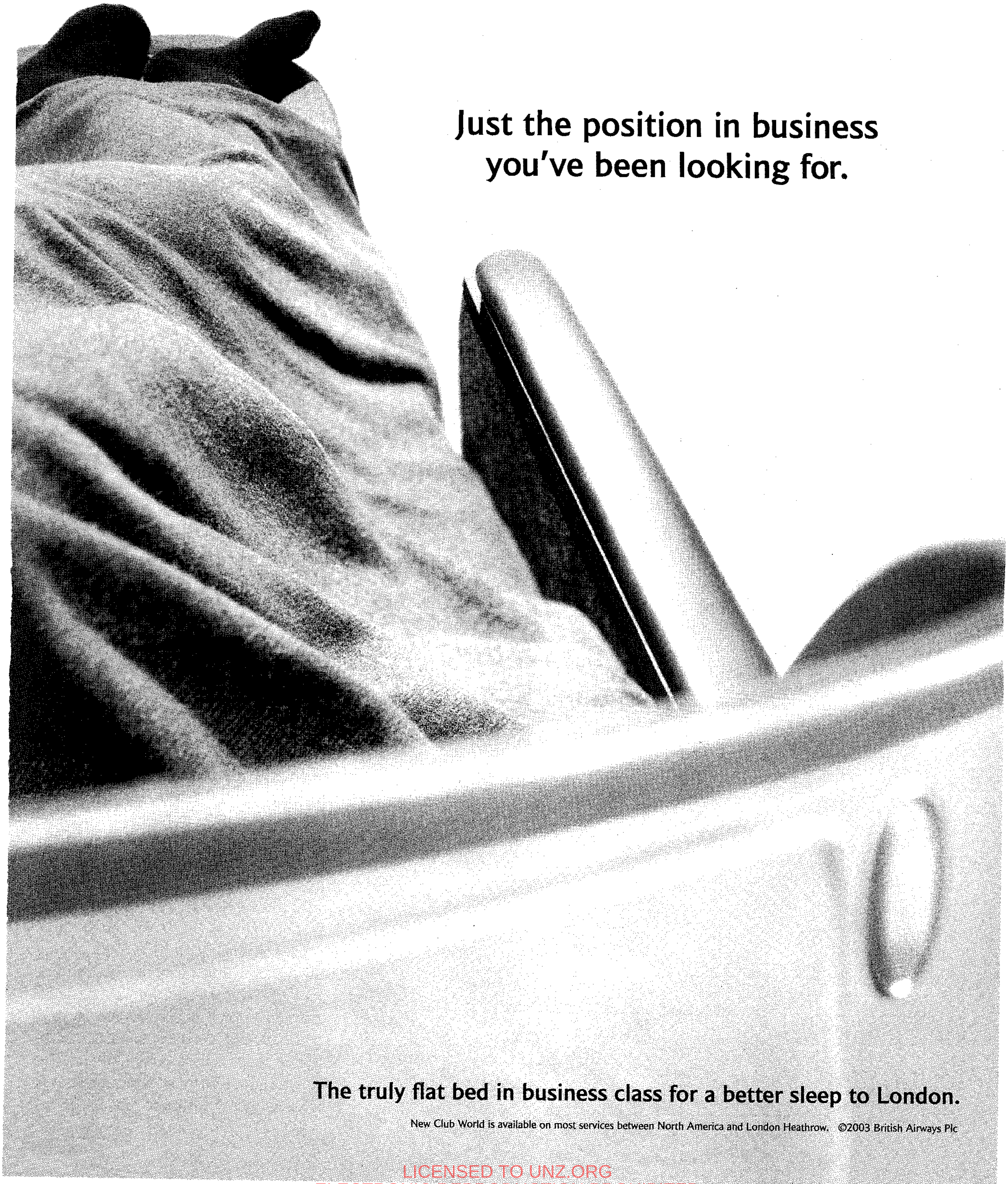


The truly flat bed in business class for a better sleep to London.

New Club World is available on most services between North America and London Heathrow. ©2003 British Airways Plc way. My wife, a Queens girl, understood that her own HAvermeyer 8 exchange was better—"but only a little better"—than her grandmother's NEwtown 9. It's my theory that, back in the telephonic Eocene, New York Tel wanted to comfort its better patrons with exchange names that suggested brokerage firms or Waspy lawyers, and came up with WIckersham, VAnderbilt, BOgardus, BArclay, and BUtterfield. RHinelander looks snooty, too, but is ethno-geographical if you think about it, since most of its customers lived in the Germanic, East Eighty-sixth Street area of Yorkville. Later Manhattan exchanges like OXford and my own LEhigh, which were tacked on in the fifties, lacked the lime-flower-tea cachet. My friend Tad remembers moving into Manhattan from the suburbs a little after this and being issued a new YUkon number. "That's when I knew I was an outsider in the big city," he said. "I was hanging on by my fingernails."

Two old tunes about Manhattan telephone exchanges: 1. Glenn Miller's "PEnnsylvania 6-5000," which was the phone number of the Pennsylvania Hotel, where Miller (and Benny Goodman, too) often played the Madhattan Room. 2. Fleecie Moore's "Caledonia"—a girl named for the exchange, as in "CaleDOHNNyah, whatmakesyourbigheadsohard?"

Back in the time of John O'Hara's 1935 novel "BUtterfield 8"—which is to be called "1-212-288" in future editions—people never heard a recorded message when they made a call. If they needed help, they got to talk to an operator. On page 38, a man is trying to reach a New York girl he hasn't seen in years. "Will you try that number again, please?" he says. "It's Stuyvesant, operator. Are you dialling S,T, U? . . . Well, I thought perhaps you were dialling S,T, Y." But nobody's home.

—*Roger Angell*

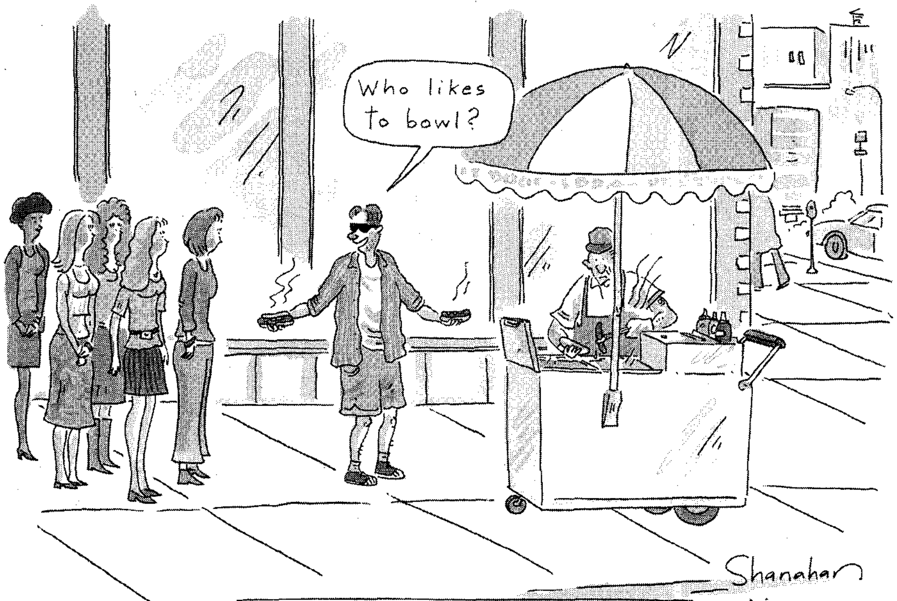
TOY DEPT.
ROBOTO

You're a collector looking at *Hyper Hobby*, the shiny Japanese magazine devoted to alluring vinyl toys and fantasy figures from Asia, tiny toys so desirable that you need tons of them. You probably can't read the Japanese text, but it's not necessary to, because there are so many photographs. You study the new Transformers—martial robots that convert into trucks and tanks and cars—and decide to pass. The Gundam figures, whose bodies are essentially frames for carrying science-fiction weapons? Also pass. Godzilla, pass. You examine the front-, rear-, and side-view photos of Gigantor, the Space Age Robot. Need Gigantor. Also the new Kubrick designs, the sturdy little vinyl Lego-man-like figures of robots and warriors and characters from American culture—a graffiti artist, with spray-painted bus stop, for example—all of them with a thrilling, soapy opacity that works on your wallet like a chainsaw. Having made a list of the toys your beating heart yearns for, you're ready to visit Toy Tokyo, which occupies apartment 2F at 121 Second Avenue, a walkup in a tenement.

Toy Tokyo—shrine to the imagination of Asian toymakers and outfits that don't sell to Toys R Us. Tin cars and monsters and little porcelain figures that were included as prizes in King Pie pastries, in Paris—you had to eat the pie to obtain them—and windup robots from the age when the world was just beginning to imagine robots: robots that are biggest around the middle, like circus strongmen; robots painted beautiful colors, so shiny they look enamelled; robots with heads under glass, like deep-sea divers, and mute, pleading expressions in their eyes. You're a collector, so you already understand that by the time these toys reach America they aren't meant to be played with. You're a fool if you play with them. Go ahead, take the robot out of the box. Now it's worthless, just a toy, something to amuse a child. If you can't keep your hands off it, observe the collector's principal rule: buy two, and leave one in the box.

At Toy Tokyo there is a glass counter with shelves of small figures in bright colors. To the left of the counter are aisles of toys, and to the right is the collector's room, full of vintage toys and twelve-inch dolls—superheroes and soldiers and limited editions of rappers and homeys made just for Toy Tokyo. David Healey, who works at Toy Tokyo, makes his own toy soldiers, which are on display in a cabinet in the collector's room. "I was supposed to be an artist," he says, "but I'm doing this." He gives the soldiers guns or changes the style of their backpacks or adds branches of camouflage. The "Not For Sale" sign in the cabinet means not if he doesn't know you.

The robots at Toy Tokyo are not the biggest-selling items. The dolls are—Blythe, for example, a foot-tall doll with a big head and big eyes. Junko Matsuno, the manager at Toy Tokyo, says that the store is divided into sections and that each section has its collectors. The Blythe section is a good one for beginners, she says, because the price is more reasonable—a

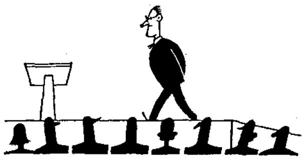


JOE HUNDREDAIRE

hundred dollars. Matsuno collects the new Blythe doll, which is a reissue and is made in Japan. The original Blythe was made in 1972, in Cincinnati, and only for a year. According to "This Is Blythe," by Gina Garan, the original Blythe "was the doll every other doll wanted to be: plucky, free-spirited, and well accessorized. One year later at the height of her powers, she turned her back on fame and now discreetly travels the globe amusing herself." Matsuno says that Garan is responsible for Blythe's being manufactured again: "Gina is a photographer, and she looks like Blythe. She start taking pictures of Blythe, and she made an exhibition in Japan. The doll became very popular, so the company start making it again." What Matsuno likes about Blythe is that you can pull a string on her back and her eyes change from blue to orange to green to pink. Robots won't do that. Garan's book includes photographs of Blythe as a kind of toy Cindy Sherman—in the park, shopping, covered with rose petals, at the beach. In one of them she is standing by a tree, with her eyes averted, and holding a sign on which is written, "Some will be pardoned, some will be punished," the creed of all lonely and overlooked people.

—*Alec Wilkinson*

THE PICTURES
STRAIGHT TO VIDEO



It's awards season in Hollywood, and sneaking in between the People's Choice Awards and the Golden Globes a couple of weeks ago were the oddly glamorous DVD Premiere Awards, a non-televised event honoring the best movies and original programming to première last year in the DVD format. Outside the Wiltern Theatre, in Los Angeles, the red carpet was clogged with members of the press, screaming fans, and—just for starters—the Olsens (Mary-Kate and Ashley), the Weinsteins (Harvey and Bob), the Hansons (the three hockey guys from "Slap Shot"), and the Tarantinos (just Quentin, actually). The Olsens, Weinsteins, and Tarantino all knew that they were going to receive honorary awards, but the Hansons, who were nominated for best supporting actor, for their work in "Slap Shot 2: Breaking the Ice," looked excited and a little nervous in their matching white tuxedos.

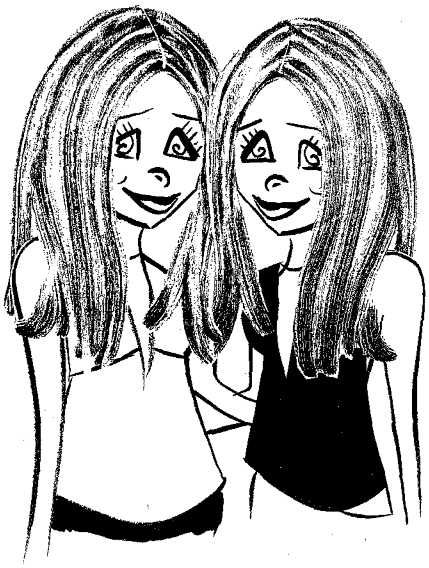
Tom DiCillo, the writer and director of "Living in Oblivion" and "Johnny Suede," had flown in from New York. His latest movie, "Double Whammy," had received five nominations, including best picture, best original screenplay, best actress (Elizabeth Hurley), and best actor (Denis Leary). The only problem for DiCillo was that this film, like his others, was supposed to have been released in theatres. "I've got to admit," he said, "I was conflicted about the whole experience." DiCillo, who is a lanky, soft-spoken man of forty-eight, said he decided to attend "out of an obligation to the film. I was proud of it. But if I won, it would almost be like standing up to say I fucked up—because I made the film to open on the big screen."

After Scott Hettrick, the head of the DVD Premieres Academy, gave the requisite introductory speech establishing the fact that DVDs are a huge business, the show was off and running. The first hour featured some unusual categories—Best Internet Premiere and Best Menu Design, for example—and then Robbie Robertson, of The Band, came onstage to accept, on behalf of himself and Martin Scorsese, the award for Best Audio Commentary (Library Title), for the reissue of "The Last Waltz." Robertson peered out at the crowd and smiled. "Is it just me, or is this not the 'Twilight Zone' of award shows?" he said. "I keep expecting David Lynch to stand up and yell 'Cut!' "

In his seat at a small table toward the back, Tom DiCillo looked uneasy. "Whenever the ceremony veers into a guy recapping the Olsen twins' earnings—including clothing and dolls—or just talking about DVD as a *venue*, that's when I feel like I have to get up and leave," he said. "I know that something like 'Night of the Evil Monkeys III' is going to win, and I don't know what I'm doing here."

Indeed, many of the awards went to sequels that were never intended for the big screen. The supporting-actress award, for example, was a tie between Lindy Booth, for "The Skulls II," and Cynthia Stevenson, for her work in "Air Bud: Seventh Inning Fetch." The Hanson brothers won, too. "It took us twenty-six years to get here," one of them said, referring to the length of time between "Slap Shot" 1 and 2.

Quentin Tarantino was ebullient when he accepted his special DVD Premiere Pioneer Award. He thanked the Academy for recognizing the creators of the kind of worthy low-budget exploitation pictures ("if you, like, made a really good women-in-prison movie") that no longer get shown in theatres. "Having worked in a video store for five years, there's a whole full-circle, snake-swallowing-its-tail kind of thing about winning this award," he said, wagging his head up and down. "All the guys who worked with me at Video Archives would be extremely proud of me right now."



The Olsen twins

Later in the show, the Hanson brothers returned to the stage to give out the best-original-screenplay award, and Tom DiCillo's name was called. DiCillo walked up to the microphone, hefted his award—a glass disk set in a gray-and-black wood base—and gazed out at the crowd. He took a moment. "I have to concur with Mr. Robertson," he said. "This is a unique evening." He smiled. "Somewhat similar to the first time I took acid, twenty years ago." Then he graciously thanked his cast and all the people who worked on the movie, and went back to his seat.

A few days later, back in New York, DiCillo said that he was glad he'd shown up for the ceremony: "There's a somewhat happy ending here. The film is not invisible. I can move forward." He added, "Of course, I would be very happy if I was never eligible for this award again."

—*John Mankiewicz*

THE FINANCIAL PAGE
THE OIL WEAPON

On October 14, 1973, in one of the biggest tank battles in history, Israeli forces routed an invading Egyptian Army, destroying about two hundred and fifty tanks and losing just twenty-five. Two days later, the Israelis—who had been aided by an American airlift of military supplies—crossed over the Suez Canal and into Egypt. In retaliation, the Arab members of OPEC declared an oil embargo against the United States, ordering a series of production cutbacks and royalty increases that tripled the price of oil. Long gas lines became commonplace and the U.S. economy fell into a recession. In a nod to austerity, Richard Nixon decreed that the national Christmas tree would go unlit.

Thirty years later, we can't see past that darkened tree. The embargo, which lasted only a few months, still shapes the way we think about the politics and economics of oil. Ever since, the spectre of Arab countries using oil as a political weapon has haunted discussions of the Middle East and the global petroleum market, and has kept U.S. policymakers obsessed with "energy security" (which in practice has meant sucking up to the Saudis) and with "energy independence" from what has come to be known, in the *Times* and elsewhere, as "the axis of oil." Fear of the oil weapon leads commentators to fret over how the Arab states will react to President Bush's ambitious plans for the Middle East, even as it inspires some advocates of those plans to declare that they will bring, as Bush's former speechwriter David Frum put it in his recent memoir, "new prosperity to us all, by securing the world's largest pool of oil." In the popular imagination, oil remains what the Kuwaiti Ambassador to the U.S. called it in 1973: "high-octane political fuel."

If so, it's fuel that's hard to burn. For all the Arab scimitar-rattling and Western hand-wringing, in the past three decades oil has been a remarkably feckless weapon. The Saudis have used threats to try to shape U.S. foreign policy, but ever since the Iranian revolution they've been the ones who have consistently stepped up production to fill the shortfalls created by political turmoil elsewhere (as they are doing now, in response to the crisis in Venezuela). And although Iran's mullahs may think of the U.S. as the Great Satan, that hasn't kept them from selling billions of gallons of oil in the world market, thereby helping to keep American gas prices down. Even Saddam Hussein (with the exception of a fruitless embargo last April to protest Israel's Palestine policy) has kept pumping as much oil as he can, or, rather, as much as the U.N. will allow.

Such bounteousness has nothing to do with benevolence and everything to do with necessity. The oil states have accommodated themselves to the new world of oil, in which OPEC is less powerful and the Western economies are less vulnerable than they were in the nineteen-seventies.

Thirty years ago, OPEC controlled fifty-five per cent of the world market. Today, OPEC controls less than forty per cent, thanks to the rise in production in places like Canada, Mexico, and the North Sea. Western countries have more than a billion barrels of oil in strategic reserves. And although the United States is by far the world's biggest consumer of oil, it uses much less oil per dollar of G.D.P. than it did thirty years ago, all those Cadillac Escalades notwithstanding.

If the Arab states slashed oil production to protest U.S. policies, it would cause us pain. But it would hurt them more. Forty per cent of Saudi Arabia's G.D.P. comes from oil revenues, and other Persian Gulf economies are similarly dependent. The oil boom of the seventies inflated the standard of living in much of the Arab world and created expectations that could be fulfilled only by a continued flow of petrodollars. In 1973, the production cutbacks didn't actually cost the Arab states anything—they sold less oil, but at a much higher price. An extended embargo today, though, would cost them tens of billions of dollars. (After all, if they could make bigger profits in the long run by cutting production, they would have done so yesterday.) Without those petrodollars, they'd fall to pieces.

As for a targeted embargo—where the Arabs would sell to everyone but the U.S.—it wouldn't work, because one barrel of oil is pretty much like any other. If the Arabs won't sell to the U.S., someone else will—three of America's four biggest suppliers are non-Arab countries. And as long as OPEC is selling to anyone it will hold down the price for everyone. Essentially, there is one global market for oil.

The Arab states, in other words, need us more than we need them. We are their best customer. That's why the Saudi foreign minister, Prince Saud al-Faisal, said recently, "Oil isn't a weapon like a cannon or a tank," and why the Egyptian President, Hosni Mubarak, last spring urged oil-producing countries to "proclaim before the world that we respect the consumer and we want to satisfy his needs and the stability of his economy."

It may sound strange to hear an Arab leader talk like the C.E.O. of Wal-Mart—to think of OPEC states as purveyors of a commodity, rather than as hoarders of treasure. But, public posturing aside, that's how they have come to see themselves. In Washington, though, this hasn't sunk in. Americans, who usually understand that economic self-interest tends to trump ideology, have assumed that in the Middle East the opposite holds true, even as various despots and mullahs have kept pumping oil regardless of what we do to them or what they think of us. U.S. policymakers still seem to be afraid of the oil weapon, seeing it as a reason for acting with caution (when it comes to pushing for change in Saudi Arabia) or aggression (when it comes to pushing for change in Iraq). By allowing this fear to shape our policy, we've given oil a power it shouldn't have.

—*James Surowiecki*

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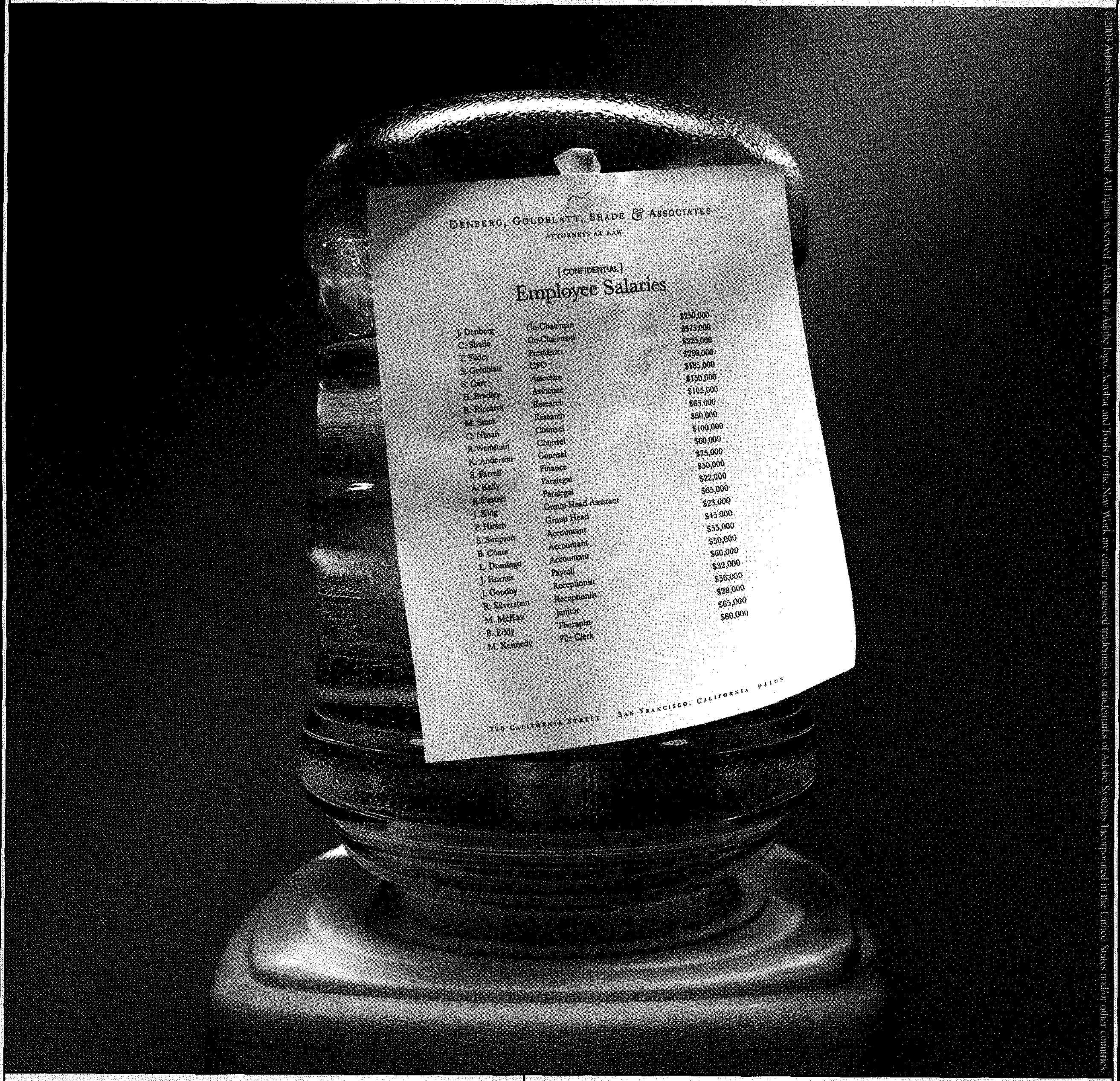

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A REPORTER AT LARGE

THE UNKNOWN

The C.I.A. and the Pentagon take another look at Al Qaeda and Iraq.

BY JEFFREY GOLDBERG

In April of 1998, President Clinton sent his United Nations Ambassador, Bill Richardson, to South Asia. Richardson's stops included New Delhi, Islamabad, and, most unusually, Kabul, where he held the first (and, as it turned out, the last) Cabinet-level negotiations between the United States and the Taliban leaders of Afghanistan. Richardson, who is now the governor of New Mexico, is an effective diplomat. (He returned to international diplomacy briefly last month, when he met with two North Korean envoys in Santa Fe.) He is irreverent, and he is not timid, and his trip might have been a diplomatic success if it had not been an intelligence failure.

During the stop in New Delhi, Richardson met with officials of the new Hindu-nationalist government of the Bharatiya Janata Party. In one encounter, Richardson asked the defense minister, George Fernandes, if his country planned to explode any of its nuclear weapons. The Indians had not tested their bomb since 1974, but in early 1998 the newspapers in New Delhi—and in Islamabad, the Pakistani capital—were filled with speculation about the new government's intentions. The B.J.P. had stated in its election platform that it would "not be dictated to by anybody in matters of security and in the exercise of the nuclear option."

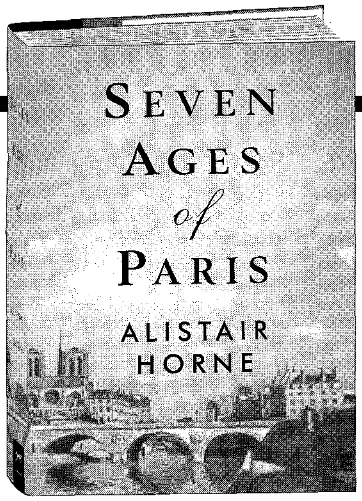
Fernandes, a self-described pacifist, told Richardson that India had no intention of exploding a nuclear device. Then he changed the subject to the situation in Burma. In other meetings, Richardson was given the same soothing message, and the mission to India was so relaxed that the Assistant Secretary of State, Karl Inderfurth, who was managing the trip, spent part of one day trying to set up a cricket demonstration for Richardson, a former minor-league baseball player. The demonstration was interrupted only once, so that Richardson could receive a six-minute intelligence briefing from a New Delhi-based C.I.A. officer.

I accompanied Richardson on the trip, and he allowed me to follow him into many of his meetings, except for C.I.A. briefings. But it is clear that no one from the C.I.A. told Richardson that the Indians were about to explode five nuclear devices in the Rajasthan desert, which is what they did less than a month after the delegation left South Asia. Not long ago, one of Richardson's former top aides, Calvin Mitchell, told me, "Even after we returned from the region, we received no intelligence that the Indians had lied to us."

Richardson was equally ill-informed in Afghanistan. In a single day, we visited Kabul and Sheberghan, a town in the north held by anti-Taliban rebels, and flew back to Islamabad at sundown. It was a strange day; at one stop, a senior National Security Council official fell into a sewage ditch, and the NBC correspondent Andrea Mitchell was nearly trampled by a posse of Uzbek horsemen. Nothing was stranger, however, than the meeting with the Taliban.

"We have a whole range of issues we're going to bring up with the Taliban leadership," Inderfurth had told me the day before the trip. Osama bin Laden, the Taliban's most famous guest, "is just one," he said.

The American delegation was met at the Kabul airport by Taliban gunmen in pickup trucks, who drove us to the Presidential Palace. The freewheeling Richardson decided to include me in the delegation, telling me to identify myself as a "note-taker," should anyone ask. An honor guard of Pashtun fighters greeted us and led us through a series of musty corridors to a small room with gray walls. The room was undecorated, except for a bookcase holding the collected works of Washington Irving. We had a long wait before the Taliban delegation arrived. It was led by Mohammed Rabbani, the



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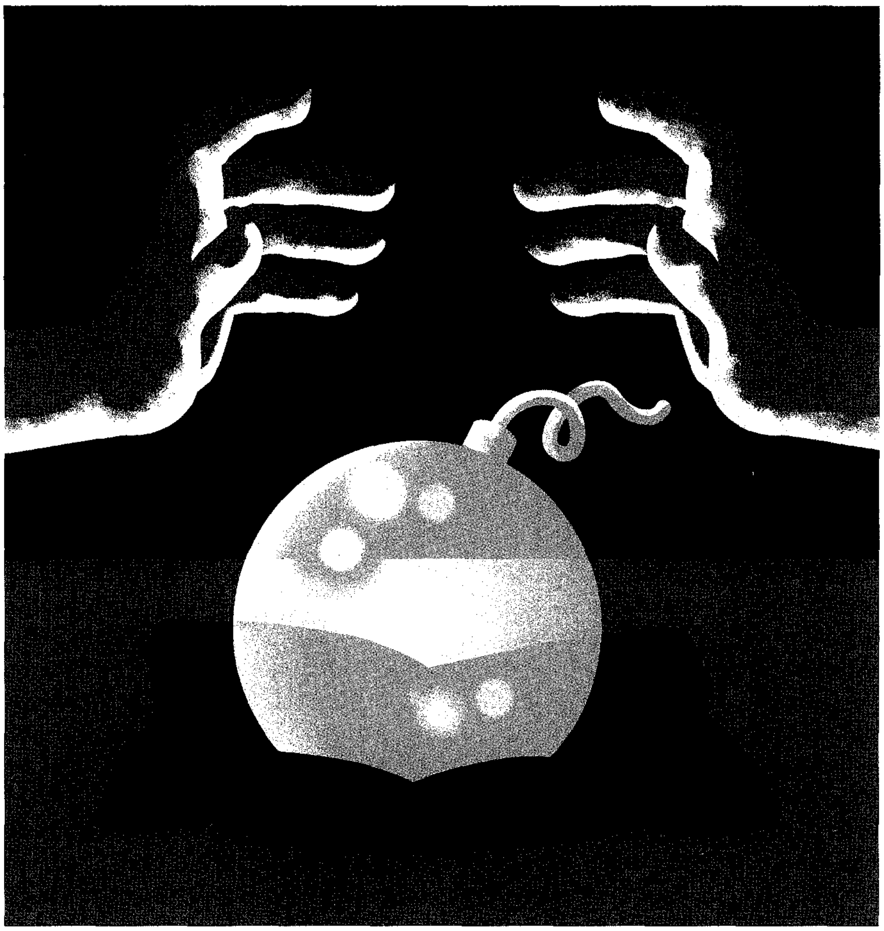
deputy to Mullah Omar, the Taliban leader (who rarely left Kandahar, and who in any case refused to meet non-Muslims). The Taliban men were ignorant of diplomatic niceties, and Richardson's icebreaking small talk was met by incomprehension. But Richardson gamely moved through the issues. He expressed the Clinton Administration's concern that the Taliban was shielding a terrorist. Rabbani, who sweated profusely throughout the meeting, responded, "He is our guest here. He is under our control."

Richardson persisted; so did the Taliban. Richardson consulted his State Department and N.S.C. advisers; we waited to see how far he would push the matter. He dropped it, and continued with the agenda, which included a discussion of the possibility of running an oil pipeline across parts of Taliban territory. We were then led to a banquet hall, where we were served rice and pigeon as gunmen circled the table.

Calvin Mitchell said, "We certainly didn't know much about Osama at the time. We didn't know the extent of his network or that he was bankrolling the entire Taliban."

When I reached Richardson recently at the governor's mansion in Santa Fe, he recalled his post-mission frustration. "When a foreign leader wants to deceive you, even the best intelligence is not going to prove in a foolproof way that the leader is deceiving you," he said. "But we need to have a better way of sensing the deception of foreign leaders."



A report from a C.I.A. team "stopped seeming so hypothetical," an official said.

CHRISTOPH NIEMANN

Shortly after the failure to predict India's nuclear tests, George Tenet, the C.I.A. director, asked a retired Navy admiral, David Jeremiah, to conduct an investigation. At the time, Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan—who had long emphasized a need to improve intelligence collection and analysis, as well as the oversight of the more than thirty-billion-dollar national intelligence apparatus—said, "The question is: Why don't we learn to read? What's the State Department for? The political leadership in India as much as said they were going to begin testing. There's a tendency at the State Department to say, 'Gee, the C.I.A. never told us.' "

Jeremiah found that the United States had an insufficient number of satellites focussed on India; that the intelligence community's photograph analysts were overworked and undertrained; and that the C.I.A. had too few spies on the ground. But underscoring all this, Jeremiah said, was a particularly American sort of assumption: both intelligence analysts and policymakers assumed that the Indians would not test their nuclear weapons because Americans would not, in similar circumstances, test nuclear weapons. In the world of intelligence, this is known as mirror-imaging: the projection of American values and behavior onto America's enemies and rivals. "I suppose my bottom line is that both the intelligence and the policy communities had an underlying mind-set going into these tests that the B.J.P. would behave as we behave," Jeremiah said at a press conference held to announce his findings.

America's early assessment of bin Laden was similarly flawed. In the American mind, of course, the bin Laden of April, 1998, was not the bin Laden of September, 2001. But his intentions were no secret. Two months before the Richardson meeting, bin Laden had issued a fatwa, a religious ruling, in which he called on Muslims to kill Americans—civilians and military. Yet, among the group of Americans travelling with Richardson five years ago, the fatwa was a passing source of black humor; the threat seemed too outlandish to be taken seriously.

In the foreword to Roberta Wohlstetter's classic 1962 study, "Pearl Harbor: Warning and Decision," the national-security expert Thomas Schelling wrote that America's ability to be surprised by the actions of its enemies is the result of a "poverty of expectations." He went on, "There is a tendency in our planning to confuse the unfamiliar with the improbable. The contingency we have not considered seriously looks strange; what looks strange is thought improbable; what is improbable need not be considered seriously."

Wohlstetter's work revealed that Pearl Harbor was not much of a surprise at all. It showed that the American government's fatal mistake was not a failure to pick up signals—overheard conversations, decoded cables, unusual ship movements—but a failure to separate out signals from noise, to understand which signals were meaningful, and to imagine that the Japanese might do something as irrational as attacking the headquarters of the U.S. Pacific fleet. In other words, the Americans heard the signals but didn't listen to them.

One day earlier this winter, I visited Fort Meade, outside Baltimore, which is the home of the National Security Agency, the country's main signals-intelligence group. The director of the N.S.A. is a cerebral, well-respected Air Force general named Michael Hayden, and I spoke to him about the challenges of signal collection. We sat in his office, a large room with a view of the N.S.A.'s obsessively guarded complex of black buildings. The office had been scrubbed of classified material in anticipation of my visit.

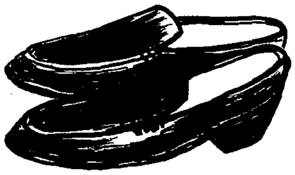
"Our noise-to-signal ratio is twenty to one, that one being something useful," Hayden told me. "Not necessarily tactically useful, just remotely useful. But even this is misleading, because it's twenty to one after we've done all sorts of things to make it humanly intelligible. You have to collect, process, translate, move it down the funnel, transform it from noise into a signal, before you know if it's useful."

I asked Hayden whether he thought Pearl Harbor or September 11th had been the greater surprise. "Pearl Harbor was, essentially, not a surprise," he said. "It was that one could not divine the meaningful signals from the thousands that were out there." He thought about the question a little longer and added, "I'm going to say, and I might change my mind, perhaps it was more a failure of imagination this time than last. We failed to see how absolute their"—Al Qaeda's—"world view is. A signals-intelligence agency gets inside the head of an adversary, if you're doing your job at all. You get to know the inside of a target. But I don't think we properly appreciated how capable and how different, how evil, that mind-set is."

Hayden also suggested that September 11th was the greater surprise, because the United States was, in effect, already at war with bin Laden. "Al Qaeda had attacked us before," he pointed out, "and we had a broad effort against the group." He noted that, after the 1998 bombings of two American embassies in East Africa, Tenet had told the intelligence community that he was "declaring war" on Al Qaeda. Nevertheless, Hayden said, America was surprised.

I asked Donald Rumsfeld, the Secretary of Defense, the same question when, in late January, I met with him in his office in the Pentagon. Rumsfeld was moving troops to the Persian Gulf that day, but in our discussion he focussed on the role of surprise in intelligence failure. He wasn't interested in assigning blame for the failure to predict or stop the September 11th attacks; in fact, he objected when I used the word "failure," preferring, as Tenet does, the word "defeat." He said, "When you hear people criticizing the agency, I think it's important to reverse it and say, 'People ought to really critique how professional and how substantive the users of intelligence are in contributing critical feedback.' " In other words, the blame for "defeats" in intelligence can be ascribed as much to executive-branch policymakers and the intelligence committees of Congress as it can to Middle East analysts in the cubicles of the C.I.A. Echoing Moynihan's argument, Rumsfeld also said that policymakers mistakenly assume that information must be secret in order to have value. "There's something about me, I suppose, and others possibly, where we read intel and we begin to think that this is the sum total of what we know about a subject and not really go in and probe the open sources, which are rich in many cases," he said.

In the late nineteen-nineties, Rumsfeld, who was then working in private industry (he had already had one tour as Secretary of Defense, under President Ford), chaired a commission set up by Congress to examine the ballistic-missile programs of America's rivals and enemies. The commission, whose members included Rumsfeld's current deputy, Paul Wolfowitz, concluded that American intelligence agencies did not possess the analytic depth or the right methods of analysis to accurately assess the threat. "Intelligence assessments and estimates must be grounded in the facts," the commission concluded. "But to be useful, they cannot be limited to reporting only what is known about a particular program. Yet, in a large number of cases examined, Commissioners found analysts unwilling to make estimates that extended beyond the hard evidence they had in hand, which effectively precluded developing and testing alternative hypotheses about the actual foreign programs taking place."



Rumsfeld is especially drawn to Schelling's theory of surprise; he believes that surprise is often the by-product of analytical timidity. "The poverty of expectations—the failure of imagination—I found this just so interesting," Rumsfeld said. "We tend to hear what we expect to hear, whether it's bad or good. Human nature is that way. Unless something is jarring, you tend to stay on your track and get it reinforced rather than recalibrated. If I as a policymaker fail to make a conscious decision that you want to go around three hundred and sixty degrees and test things, you're likely to stay in a rut. And we've seen our country do that."

Rumsfeld believes that one long-held belief among Middle East analysts is overdue for reconsideration: the idea that doctrinal differences prevent Sunni and Shiite Muslims, and religious and secular Muslims, from pursuing common projects in anti-American terrorism. This is a subject of great relevance today, because the Bush Administration contends that Baghdad is a sponsor of Al Qaeda; critics of the Administration's foreign policy argue that bin Laden and Saddam Hussein are natural enemies. "The argument is that Al Qaeda has got a religious motivation, somehow or other, and the Iraqi regime is considered to be a secular regime," Rumsfeld said. "The answer to that is, so what? The Iraqi regime will use anything it can to its advantage. Why wouldn't they use any implement at hand?"

Rumsfeld's work on the ballistic-missile commission convinced him that intelligence analysts were not asking themselves the full range of questions on any given subject—including what they didn't know. Rumsfeld gave me a copy of some aphorisms he had collected during the process of assessing the ballistic-missile threat. "Some of these are humorous," he said, not quite accurately. One was "There are knowns, known unknowns, and unknown unknowns." (The saying is attributed, naturally, to "Unknown.") "I think this construct is just powerful," Rumsfeld said. "The unknown unknowns, we do not even know we don't know them."

During the commission's hearings, Rumsfeld went on, intelligence analysts would brief the commission members. "They'd say, 'This is a fact.' And we'd say, 'Well, when did you learn it?' 'On this day, X.' 'And when did it start?' 'Back here, several years back.' And, of course, it's embarrassing. When you get some pieces of information, the implication is, you know, that you've done a good job. But the real question is: When did it actually start and when did we find out about it?"

In the case of the missile programs of two countries he would not name, he said, "There were instances in which we didn't know something until two, four, six, eight, twelve, and, in one case, thirteen years after it happened. If we didn't know this for five years, that means that there may very well be things that started five years ago that we don't know about at all."

Rumsfeld said that the ideas contained in the commission's report are spreading through the fourteen organizations that make up the intelligence community (these range from the Defense Intelligence Agency to Coast Guard intelligence). "You find not infrequently now that there will be a section, and it will have a fairly typical analysis, and then it will be followed by a section labelled 'What we don't know.'"

There have been frequent reports of tension between the Defense Department and the C.I.A., particularly on the question of the links between Saddam and Al Qaeda. But the two men who lead these bureaucracies have kind words for each other.

"Rumsfeld should get a hell of a lot of credit for challenging the conventional wisdom, for challenging the bureaucracy," Tenet told me not long ago in his office at C.I.A. headquarters, in Langley, Virginia. Tenet, who does not conform to the patrician mold of the C.I.A.'s early directors—he is Greek-American and a proud son of Queens—seemed tired on the gray morning we met. His office is long and narrow; a torn American flag rescued from the ruins of the World Trade Center hung on the wall over his shoulder.

When Tenet and Rumsfeld talk about

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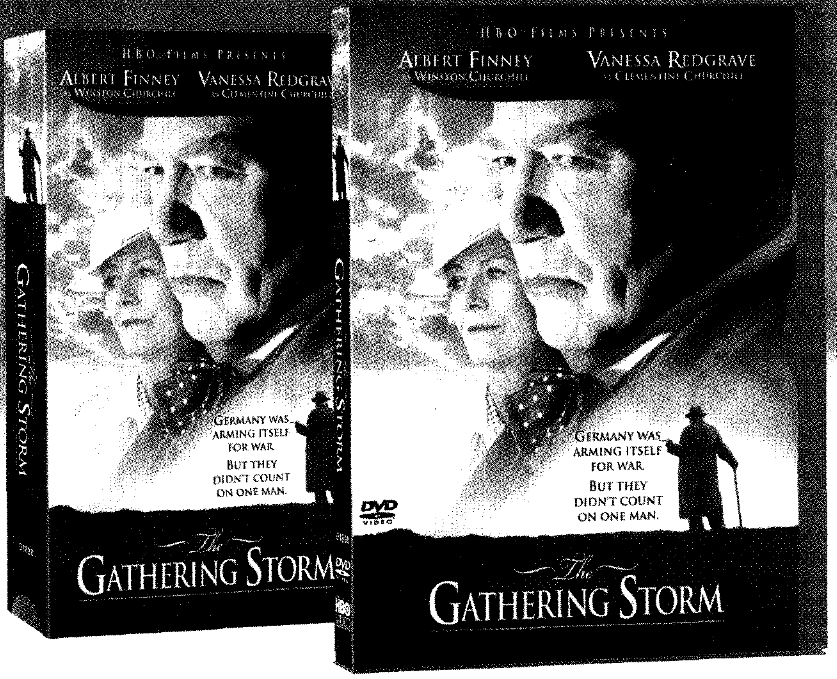
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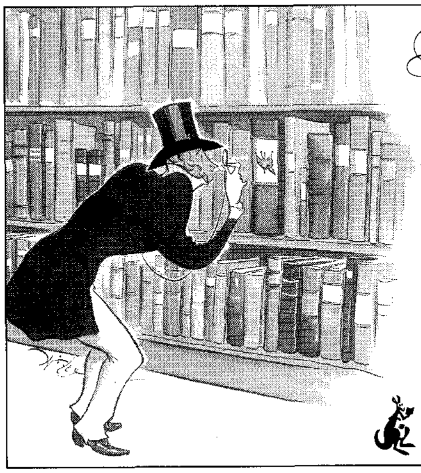

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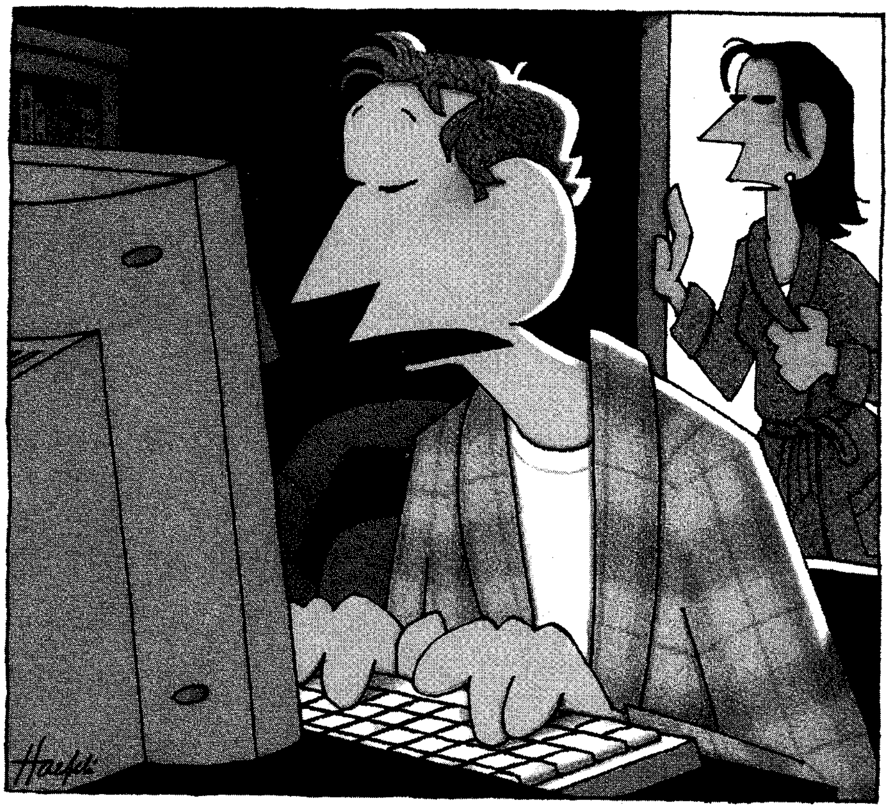
intelligence theory, it is hard to see major differences. Of his own agency Tenet said, "We spend a great deal of time encouraging analysts to get out of their own skins, to try to think the way the enemy thinks." He also said, "We're emphasizing the point, as the saying goes, that intelligence work is often not about evidence but about the absence of evidence." (Aides to both Tenet and Rumsfeld claim that their man devised this formula.)

Tenet, who became the C.I.A. director in 1997 (he was a Clinton appointee), gained the trust of President Bush early in the Administration, and he has survived thanks to the C.I.A.'s work during the war in Afghanistan; to his desire to rebuild the C.I.A.'s clandestine service, which had fallen into disrepair during the Clinton years; and to the fact that, while the C.I.A. committed major blunders in the days leading up to September 11th, the F.B.I.'s mistakes were catastrophic. In addition, he is able to communicate effectively on Capitol Hill.

In his office, Tenet listed questions that he thinks should be asked about the C.I.A.'s performance. "Are we making steady progress in penetration? Yes. Do we have success in technical intelligence-gathering? Yes. Did we stop the attacks? No." Tenet went on, "The Israelis probably have as ironclad a structure to deter terrorism as anybody in the world, but they continue to lose people. The way they think about this is that they are in a constant state of war and there are wins and losses in a war. This changes their mind-set." He added, "Failure means you're not paying attention. You knew about the target but you didn't do anything about it. Defeat is what happens in a war against an agile enemy who will find ways to beat you."

Tenet doesn't think that America has experienced the worst of Al Qaeda terrorism. "My worry is that, whatever we learn, it will never be enough. There will be another attack. They will take advantage of seams in our security. If you're looking for infallibility in the intelligence system, you're going to be constantly surprised and pained. You're dealing with an enemy that has studied your homeland extremely well."

As in the days before Pearl Harbor, there was no lack of meaningful signals in the weeks before September 11th. In fact, Tenet spent the summer of 2001 hectoring lawmakers and Administration officials about the danger he saw on the horizon. "George just badgered me," Porter Goss, the chairman of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, told me. Goss, a Florida Republican who is a former C.I.A. officer and an ally of Tenet's, said that he had agreed to be badgered. "I understood what was happening," Goss said. "But we failed anyway. We knew what was coming, but we could not sing the song in a key that anyone would hear."



"But I'm hot on the trail of my Google doppelgänger."

The C.I.A., of course, did not know the time or the place of the anticipated attack, and so could offer no tactical intelligence. It made at least one critical error, when it learned, long before September 11th, that two of the hijackers, who had attended a crucial Al Qaeda planning meeting in Malaysia, were travelling to America. Despite this knowledge, the C.I.A. did not place the men's names on terrorist watch lists until August of 2001.

Tenet, while admitting that his agency made mistakes, said that excessive focus on such mistakes obscures larger truths. "People can fault individual decisions," he said. "But it's vignette-driven. 'Why didn't you watch-list these particular guys?' But with these vignettes you're going to miss the bigger picture—that they're going to come in using different techniques next time." Many intelligence officials assume that watch lists have only limited value; terrorists, they say, will travel to post-9/11 America using false documents.

The desire to identify the people responsible for intelligence failure is natural, but it may be irrelevant, according to Thomas Schelling, who teaches at the University of Maryland. "I tend to think there's too much interest in finding blame for September 11th," Schelling said. "Surprise has two very different meanings. One is 'I didn't expect it,' and the other is 'I couldn't anticipate everything.' It seems to me that if smart people had somehow made a list of one hundred potential Al Qaeda targets, and then from that figured out that they might hijack airplanes and use them in attacks, they would still have a hard time telling the officials of airports what to be on the lookout for, or what these men would need to hijack a plane. I tend to think that what Al Qaeda did was beautifully conceived but not terribly difficult to do. Once they had the concept, the rest was easy."

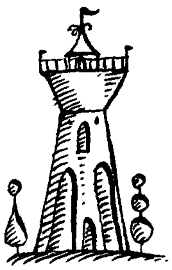
On the question of failure of imagination, Tenet seemed to disagree with Rumsfeld. "We don't have an absence of imagination," he said. "What we have is threat fatigue. We're inundated by this stuff. We have to guard against numbness as we go through intense periods of threat reporting."

Top C.I.A. officials told me that analysts in the agency's Counterterrorist Center had imagined the airborne suicide attack as a tactic, but had also imagined dozens of other ways in which terrorists could strike American targets. I asked one official why his analysts could not match a target to a technique—why they couldn't guess that the World Trade Center, which had been the target of one terrorist attack, in 1993, would be the target of another, from the air. "We had reports over the last six or eight years that Al Qaeda people are interested in aviation," this person told me. "You have concrete knowledge that the World Trade Center is a target. What keeps those two pieces of information from joining? Well, if we took every credible tactic we hear about and applied it to every credible target, the alarm would be sounded every day."

But Tenet said that his analysts have been encouraged to extend themselves, to lower the threshold for what is credible. In intelligence, he said, "very few snippets of evidence can take you to a judicial conclusion. Nothing is crystal clear." He's also pushing his analysts to think in different ways. "We're moving people away from linear thinking," he said, and added, "It takes years and years to walk back the risk aversion in a bureaucracy, but we're doing it."

In the ideological taxonomy of the Bush Administration, the C.I.A., because it has long downplayed the theory of an Iraq-Al Qaeda connection, has been regarded as being on the side of the doves. The hawks have accused the C.I.A. of politicizing the intelligence process by dismissing information that would substantiate the connection—and in that way strengthen the Administration's case against Iraq.

A key moment in this argument took place one weekday last August, when a small group of Defense Department officials drove from the Pentagon to the headquarters of the C.I.A., for what they expected to be a tension-filled meeting with the agency's top analysts. Leading the Pentagon team was Douglas Feith, the Under-Secretary of Defense for policy, who is considered to be an Iraq hawk in the style of his superiors, Wolfowitz and Rumsfeld. Feith brought with him a Defense Intelligence Agency analyst, Tina Shelton, and a Naval intelligence reservist, Christopher Carney. The Defense Department had asked Shelton and Carney to reëxamine evidence collected by the C.I.A. about the relationship between terrorist networks and their state sponsors, including Iraq and Al Qaeda, and to re-analyze the data in the manner suggested by Rumsfeld's ballistic-missile-threat commission; that is, to build a hypothesis, and then see if the data supported the hypothesis, rather than the reverse. "If you take thirty movie reviewers and show them the same movie," Feith told me, "they will understand its meaning in thirty different ways, and they will even understand the plot in different ways, and I'm not talking about watching 'Rashomon.' "



The presentation was made in a small conference room, and as many as twenty C.I.A. executives and analysts crowded in, along with the director of the D.I.A., Vice-Admiral Lowell E. Jacoby, and Tenet himself. According to several people with knowledge of the meeting, Carney and Shelton told the C.I.A. officials that, based on their own reading of agency intelligence, it appeared likely that Saddam's relationship with Al Qaeda was serious and that it dated back to the terror group's early days in Sudan. Bin Laden had his headquarters in Khartoum in the early nineteen-nineties, before moving to Afghanistan, in 1996. "These people weren't hired to do alternative analysis," Feith claimed. "But once they read deeply into the material, which, by the way, was good C.I.A. material, they came up with some fresh connections and ideas and analysis." Feith went on, "When we fed this analysis back into the C.I.A., they were happy to receive it. Tenet understands, as Rumsfeld understands, that an extra set of eyes on intelligence material is a good thing."

The Defense team had expected resistance from C.I.A. officials, but, to the surprise of many in the room, Tenet was open to the Pentagon analysis. However, one top official familiar with Tenet's thinking told me that early last year, well before the August meeting, C.I.A. officials had asked the agency's Red Cell team, an internal think tank, to undertake "a different sort of analysis, 'go a little more hypothetical on the question, and see what you come up with.' They gave us a report, and it seemed pretty hypothetical. But then it stopped seeming so hypothetical."

There's nothing new about hypothesis-driven analysis. Angelo Codevilla, a Boston University professor of international relations and a former senior staff member of the Senate Intelligence Committee, pointed to the risks—in particular that "you put the monkey on the back of the policymaker. This is dangerous if you have policymakers who don't want to hear more than one opinion. George Bush, just like his father, doesn't like to be faced with choices." Codevilla also said that analysts could "stray too far from the data," adding that the real problem is that "the C.I.A. has not been gathering enough quality data." According to a senior Administration official, the C.I.A. itself is split on the question of a Baghdad-Al Qaeda connection: analysts in the agency's Near East–South Asia division discount the notion; the Counterterrorist Center supports it. The senior Administration official told me that Tenet tends to agree with the Counterterrorist Center.

When I saw Tenet, I asked if he now considered Saddam to be a primary sponsor of Al Qaeda. "Well, read my letter to Senator Graham," Tenet replied.

In October of 2002, when Bob Graham was the chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, Tenet wrote to him, explaining the C.I.A.'s understanding of the Iraq-Al Qaeda connection. It is a curious letter, which begins with a statement that "Baghdad for now appears to be drawing a line short of conducting terrorist attacks with conventional or CBW"—chemical and biological weapons—"against the United States." At the same time, Tenet said, Iraq has "provided training to Al Qaeda members in the areas of poisons and gases and making conventional bombs." Tenet added, "Credible information indicates that Iraq and Al Qaeda have discussed safe haven and reciprocal non-

aggression," and he suggested that, even without an American attack on Iraq, "Baghdad's links to terrorists will increase."

The evolution of Tenet's beliefs has made those opposed to an invasion of Iraq uneasy. Senator Graham thinks that the C.I.A.'s "evolved" understanding of the Iraq-Al Qaeda connection is the result of pressure from Rumsfeld. "Maybe the C.I.A. has been coöpted in this whole thing," Graham told me. "I'm not personalizing it to George, but institutionally the C.I.A. is being challenged by a very aggressive Defense Department."

Others who have watched Tenet, however, say that he does not trim his opinions for political reasons. "I find him to be a straightforward person on analysis," Nancy Pelosi, the House Minority Leader, who until recently was the ranking Democrat on the intelligence committee, told me. Pelosi added that she considers Iran a greater terrorist threat than Iraq.

Tenet's thinking on the subject was deliberate, according to several agency sources. Information gleaned from the interrogations of high-level Al Qaeda prisoners pushed Tenet to rethink the opinion, advanced by C.I.A. officials such as Paul Pillar, the National Intelligence Officer for the Middle East, that ideological differences between the secular Saddam and Islamic radicals, such as Al Qaeda, made it unlikely that these two enemies of America would form an alliance. Clearly, the Rumsfeld view, which maintains that the commonly held hatred of the United States trumps ideology and theology, is ascendant, at the C.I.A. as well as at the Pentagon. Pillar himself, in a faxed comment, conceded that, "despite major differences, tactical coöperation is possible," but added that "the contingency that would be most likely to motivate Saddam to develop a relationship with radical Islamists that would be deeper than limited tactical cooperation would be a belief that he was about to lose power"—such as in a United States-led attack on Iraq.

According to several intelligence officials I spoke to, the relationship between bin Laden and Saddam's regime was brokered in the early nineteen-nineties by the then de-facto leader of Sudan, the pan-Islamist radical Hassan al-Tourabi. Tourabi, sources say, persuaded the ostensibly secular Saddam to add to the Iraqi flag the words "Allahu Akbar," as a concession to Muslim radicals.

In interviews with senior officials, the following picture emerged: American intelligence believes that Al Qaeda and Saddam reached a non-aggression agreement in 1993, and that the relationship deepened further in the mid-nineteen-nineties, when an Al Qaeda operative—a native-born Iraqi who goes by the name Abu Abdullah al-Iraqi—was dispatched by bin Laden to ask the Iraqis for help in poison-gas training. Al-Iraqi's mission was successful, and an unknown number of trainers from an Iraqi secret-police organization called Unit 999 were dispatched to camps in Afghanistan to instruct Al Qaeda terrorists. (Training in hijacking techniques was also provided to foreign Islamist radicals inside Iraq, according to two Iraqi defectors quoted in a report in the *Times* in November of 2001.) Another Al Qaeda operative, the Iraqi-born Mamdouh Salim, who goes by the name Abu Hajer al-Iraqi, also served as a liaison in the mid-nineteen-nineties to Iraqi intelligence. Salim, according to a recent book, "The Age of Sacred Terror," by the former N.S.C. officials Daniel Benjamin and Steven Simon, was bin Laden's chief procurer of weapons of mass destruction, and was involved in the early nineties in chemical-weapons development in Sudan. Salim was arrested in Germany in 1998 and was extradited to the United States. He is awaiting trial in New York on charges related to the 1998 East Africa embassy bombings; he was convicted last April of stabbing a Manhattan prison guard in the eye with a sharpened comb.

Intelligence officials told me that the agency also takes seriously reports that an Iraqi known as Abu Wa'el, whose real name is Saadoun Mahmoud Abdulatif al-Ani, is the liaison of Saddam's intelligence service to a radical Muslim group called Ansar al-Islam, which controls a small enclave in northern Iraq; the group is believed by American and Kurdish intelligence officials to be affiliated with Al Qaeda. I learned of another possible connection early last year, while I was interviewing Al Qaeda operatives in a Kurdish prison in Sulaimaniya. There, a man whom Kurdish intelligence officials identified as a captured Iraqi agent told me that in 1992 he served as a bodyguard to Ayman al-Zawahiri, bin Laden's deputy, when Zawahiri secretly visited Baghdad.

Ansar al-Islam was created on September 1, 2001, when two Kurdish radical groups merged forces. According to Barham Salih, the Prime Minister of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, the group seized a chain of villages in the mountainous region outside the city of Halabja, and made a safe haven for Al Qaeda fighters. "Our intelligence information confirmed that the group was declared on September 1st at the behest of bin Laden and Al Qaeda," Prime Minister Salih told me last week, in a telephone conversation from Davos, Switzerland. "It was meant to be an alternative base of operations, since they were apparently anticipating that Afghanistan was going to become a denied area to them."

Salih also said that a month before the September 11th attacks a senior Al Qaeda operative called Abdulrahman al-Shami was dispatched from Afghanistan to the Kurdish mountain town of Biyara, to organize the Ansar al-Islam enclave.

Shami was killed in November, 2001, in a battle with the pro-American forces of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan.

The Ansar al-Islam enclave, according to Salih and American intelligence officials, soon became the base of operations of an Al Qaeda subgroup called Jund al-Shams, or Soldiers of the Levant, which operates mainly in Jordan and Syria. Jund al-Shams is controlled by a man named Mussa'ab al-Zarqawi, a Jordanian of Palestinian extraction. Zarqawi is believed by European intelligence agencies to be Al Qaeda's main specialist in chemical and biological terrorism. Zarqawi is also believed to be behind the assassination, on October 28th, of an American A.I.D. official in Jordan, and also two unsuccessful assassination attempts: last February 20th, Ali Bourjaq, a Jordanian secret-police official, escaped injury when a bomb detonated near his home; and on April 2nd gunmen opened fire on Prime Minister Salih's home in Sulaimaniya. Salih was unhurt, but five of his bodyguards were killed; two bystanders were killed in the Bourjaq assassination attempt.

The Administration believes that Zarqawi made his way to Baghdad after the United States' invasion of Afghanistan, when he was wounded. According to American sources, Zarqawi was treated in a Baghdad hospital but disappeared from Baghdad shortly after the Jordanian government asked Iraq to extradite him. American intelligence officials believe that Zarqawi was also among an unknown number of Al Qaeda terrorists who have sought refuge in the Ansar al-Islam over the past seventeen months.

Recently, I asked two former C.I.A. directors, James Woolsey and Robert Gates, to talk about the problem of analyzing an incomplete set of evidence—the same challenge that stymied intelligence analysts in the days before December 7, 1941, and September 11, 2001.

Woolsey, who served as President Clinton's first C.I.A. director, said that it is now illogical to doubt the notion that Saddam collaborates with Islamist terrorism, and that he would provide chemical or biological weapons to Al Qaeda. “At Salman Pak”—a training camp near Baghdad—“we know there were Islamist terrorists training to hijack airplanes in groups of four or five with short knives,” Woolsey told me. “I mean, hello? If we had seen after December 7, 1941, a fake American battleship in a lake in northern Italy, and a group of Asian pilots training there, would we have said, ‘Well, you can't prove that they were Japanese’?”

Gates, who was C.I.A. director under George H. W. Bush, said that the evidence linking Saddam to Al Qaeda is not irrefutable, but he noted that ambiguous evidence is an occupational hazard in intelligence work. Gates suggested that the current debate over Iraq's ties to terrorism is reminiscent of a debate about the Soviet Union twenty years ago. Then, he said, “you had analysts in the C.I.A. who said, ‘Absolutely not, it would be contrary to their interests to support unpredictable, uncontrollable groups.’ There were other analysts who said, ‘Baloney.’ They had a lot of good history, and circumstantial reporting on their side, but they didn't have good evidence. Once the Soviet Union collapsed, and we got hold of the East German Stasi records, we learned, of course, that both the East Germans and the Soviets were supporting Baader-Meinhof and other terrorist groups.”

Gates continued, “I have always argued, in light of my fairly detailed knowledge of the shortcomings of our intelligence capabilities, that the fact that we don't have reliable human intelligence that proves something conclusively is happening is no proof at all that nothing is happening. In these situations, the evidence will almost always be ambiguous. On capabilities, it's not ambiguous. Can Saddam produce these weapons of mass destruction? Yes.”

The ambiguity, Gates said, has to do with “intentions,” and he went on, “If the stakes and the consequences are small, you're going to want ninety-per-cent assurance. It's a risk calculus. On the other hand, if your worry is along the lines of what Rumsfeld is saying—another major attack on the U.S., possibly with biological or chemical weapons—and you look at the consequences of September 11th, then the equation of risk changes. You have to be prepared to go forward with a lot lower level of confidence in the evidence you have. A fifty-per-cent chance of such an attack happening is so terrible that it changes the calculation of risk.” ♦

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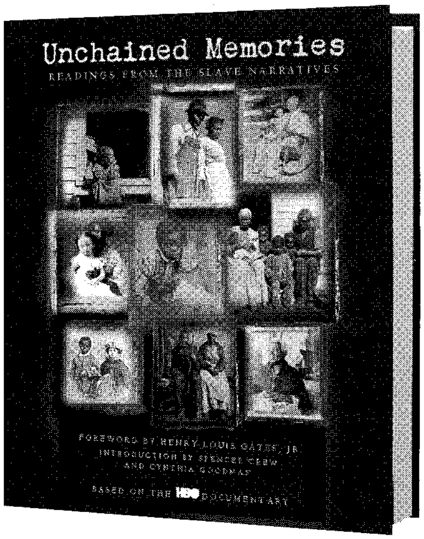
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ANNALS OF MEDICINE

THE EDMONTON PROTOCOL

The search for a cure for diabetes takes a controversial turn.

BY JEROME GROOPMAN

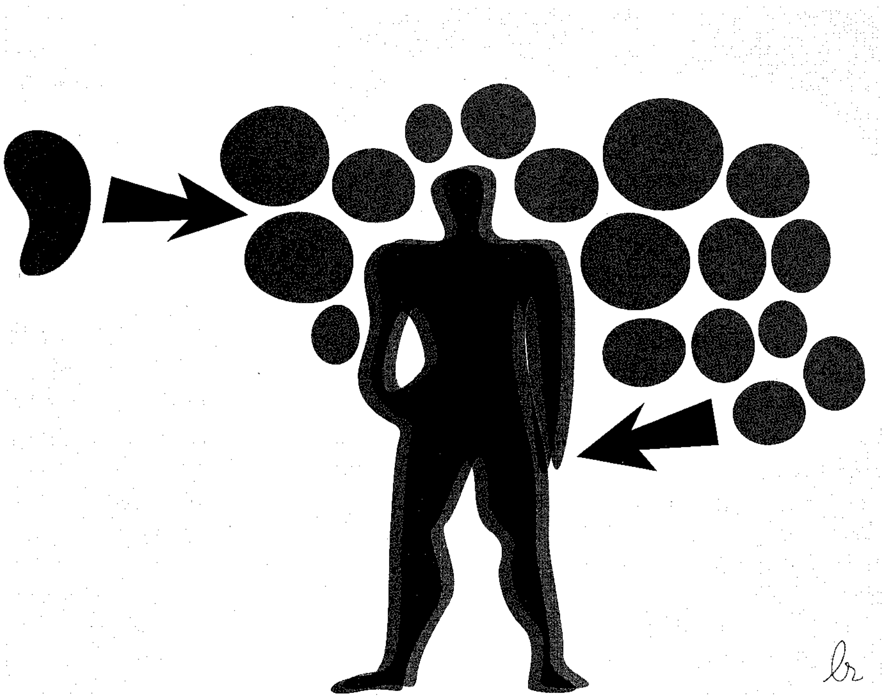
One day in 1972, when Dana Shields was fourteen, she became so thirsty that she found herself gulping water from a faucet, unable to get enough. Soon afterward, she started to lose weight; within weeks, she had dropped about twenty pounds. At the time, Dana was competing for a place on her high school's field-hockey team, and she attributed these symptoms to a rigorous training schedule. She cut back on exercise, but she could not gain weight. One afternoon a few weeks later, she ate a brownie, drank some Pepsi and some chocolate milk, and started to vomit. Her parents took her to the emergency room. Test results showed that Dana's blood sugar, or glucose, was at more than six times the normal level. She had developed diabetes.

Dana (this is not her real name) had Type 1, or juvenile, diabetes, an autoimmune disease that occurs, in most cases during childhood, when T cells attack and destroy the islet cells in the pancreas, which produce insulin. (Type 1 diabetes is entirely different from Type 2 diabetes, in which the body continues to produce insulin but no longer responds to it; that disease, which generally develops in adulthood, can often be controlled by regulating glucose levels through diet.) Without the ability to produce insulin, a person cannot properly metabolize glucose, and toxic acids accumulate in the blood. Over time, serious complications may arise, among them blindness, kidney failure, extensive nerve damage, and accelerated atherosclerosis, which can lead to a heart attack or a stroke. There is a genetic predisposition for Type 1 diabetes, and thirty thousand new cases are diagnosed in the United States each year. There is no known cure.

Dana chafed at the onerous regimen she was put on: she had to test her blood sugar every few hours, and give herself multiple insulin injections to keep her glucose levels within a normal range. When she left for college, she became careless about her health. Her blood glucose often rose out of control, and she spent many weekends in the infirmary being treated for dehydration, which accompanies high blood-sugar levels. Four years after graduating, Dana, a slim woman with blond hair and blue eyes, married. At twenty-seven, she decided to have a baby, and consulted an obstetrician who specialized in high-risk cases. Shortly after the child was born, she developed retinal damage, and had to undergo a series of laser treatments to prevent blindness. "I finally grew up and realized that I needed to deal with my illness," she told me not long ago.

Dana began to check her blood-sugar level every few hours, adjusting it with a shot of insulin. But, even with such vigilant attention, a diabetic cannot manually match the second-by-second release of insulin from the islets of the healthy pancreas, which keeps the body's glucose level within a normal range, and Dana's condition continued to worsen. The nerves that control the stomach and the intestine began to malfunction, so that she could not digest an ordinary meal. When she became pregnant a second time, her kidney function deteriorated. She delivered a healthy child, but her doctors concluded that she would eventually require dialysis and a kidney transplant. Seven years later, she underwent a transplant, which improved her health, but she was obliged to take strong—and potentially dangerous—immunosuppressive medications to ward off rejection of the new organ.

Dana, who now runs a family business in upstate New York, told me that she felt imprisoned. "Not a moment of the day went by when I didn't think about my disease, how each activity—whether it was eating or jogging or sitting through a long movie—could affect my blood sugar and the amount of insulin I needed to inject," she said. She expected more complications in the future, and she knew that there was little she could do to prevent them. She had heard reports of "breakthroughs" in diabetes research, but nothing seemed to have come of them.



Diabetes patients got used to hearing about "breakthroughs" that went nowhere.

LAURIE ROSENWALD

Dana had not heard about extensive research into Type 1 diabetes that Canadian scientists were conducting at the University of Alberta, in Edmonton. Canada has a long tradition of diabetes research, and two Canadians, Frederick Banting and Charles Best, are credited with the discovery of insulin. At the turn of the last century, doctors knew that the pancreas played a role in regulating blood sugar but did not know how. Shortly after the First World War, Banting, a young doctor in Ontario, decided to explore the origins of diabetes. He found some laboratory space at the University of Toronto, received approval to experiment on dogs, and hired a student assistant, Charles Best. After just a few months of work, Banting and Best identified insulin, a protein that was made in the islet cells of the pancreas and had a crucial connection to the malady. Further research into Type 1 diabetics indicated that these patients' islet cells were damaged beyond repair and could not produce insulin. Banting and Best concluded that insulin injections were the best way of controlling the swings in glucose levels. For the first time, diabetics were not totally at the mercy of their disease. Later research, however, showed that regular insulin shots did not prevent Type 1 patients from suffering the debilitating side effects. Some scientists concluded that Type 1 diabetes could ultimately be remedied only by the restoration of the islet cells themselves.

In 1972, Paul Lacey, a researcher at Washington University, in St. Louis, Missouri, cured diabetic rats by transplanting the islet cells from a healthy rat. Ray Rajotte, a bioengineer at the University of Alberta, attended the meeting at which Lacey presented his remarkable results. "We all sat and applauded," Rajotte said. "We thought the cure had arrived." Rajotte set up a program in Edmonton to develop Lacey's work with humans. Other scientists followed suit in the United States and in Europe. Instead of grafting the donor islets into the pancreas of the diabetic rat, Lacey infused the cells into the vein that supplies the liver, bypassing the pancreas altogether. Ideally, the infused cells would form small nests in the liver and function like the cells of a healthy pancreas, sensing from moment to moment the body's glucose level and producing precisely the appropriate amount of insulin.

Over the next twenty years, researchers made more than four hundred attempts to apply the procedure to humans. The transplanted islet cells survived in

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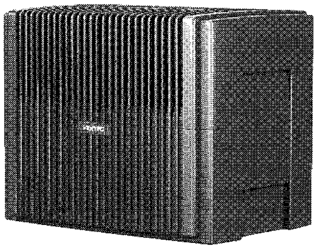

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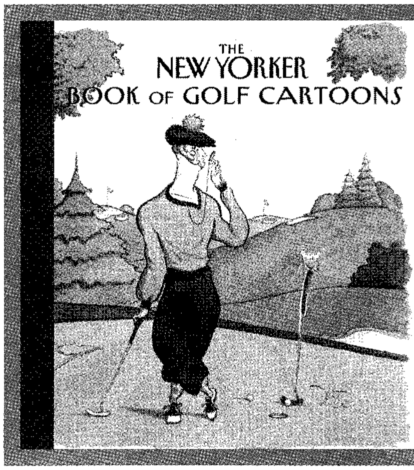
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only a handful of cases; most stopped producing insulin after a few days. No one was sure what accounted for the difference between rats and people. Some scientists speculated that in humans the attacking T cells, which caused the disease, turned against the transplanted islets, despite the use of immunosuppressive drugs. Others wondered whether the fragile cells from the donated pancreas were damaged during the transplant. By the early nineteen-nineties, scientists had largely concluded that islet-cell transplantation was futile. Many argued that it was unethical to continue to subject diabetics to a possibly harmful procedure that involved the administration of dangerous drugs. In 1996, the National Institutes of Health, the primary financial supporter of biomedical research, devoted less than three per cent of its diabetes budget to research on islet-cell transplantation.

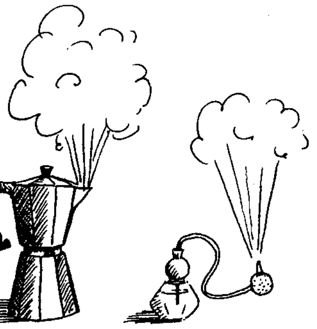
At the same time, there was a surge in basic research into how insulin alters cell molecules. In 1990, the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, a private philanthropy, began a fund-raising campaign called "The Only Remedy Is a Cure," and its board gave millions of dollars to basic-science researchers. Yet by 1995 no significant clinical progress had been made, and key members of the foundation—mainly parents of children with Type 1—were bitter and frustrated. One of the most outspoken was Emily Spitzer, a lawyer who had served on the board of directors and as a lay reviewer of research. Her seven-year-old daughter, who had had diabetes since infancy, said to her, "Mommy, you spend all this time at the foundation, and nothing has changed for me."

In 1996, Spitzer organized a meeting of J.D.R.F. scientists to discuss research priorities. When she asked them what the foundation should be doing differently "to cure our kids," she was met with blank faces. Then one prominent researcher spoke up: "Emily, the system is working fine. Why do you want to change it?"

Spitzer reported to the board of the J.D.R.F. that, despite the enormous sums it was spending on research, scant progress in treatment had been made. Still, no one was willing to give up. "The board had a lot of businessmen who were used to operating in a business mode," Dr. Robert Goldstein, the foundation's chief scientific officer, told me. In 1997, the foundation decided to pursue the cure of juvenile diabetes as if it were a business project, incorporating strict accountability and specific milestones. The board engaged McKinsey & Company, on a pro-bono basis, to assist in mapping potential paths to a cure.

Sandra Puczynski, a J.D.R.F. volunteer and a laboratory scientist whose young daughter had diabetes, was appointed to head the project. She interviewed more than a hundred researchers at universities, pharmaceutical companies, and government facilities. Each was asked to suggest ways to prevent juvenile diabetes from occurring, to maintain normal levels of blood sugar in those who had already developed the disease, and to remedy the serious complications.

One of the people she talked to was Dr. Gordon Weir, a researcher at the Joslin Diabetes Center, in Boston. Weir and his wife, Susan Bonner-Weir, had recently published an article in which they argued that further work on the transplantation of islet cells had been wrongly neglected. "Islet transplantation," the Weirs wrote, "may be the most emotionally charged area in diabetes research because its availability would provide the equivalent of a cure, bringing not only freedom from the burdens of injections, glucose testing, and dietary restrictions, but even more importantly, protection from the dreaded complications of diabetes." The foundation decided to focus on islet transplantation. Many scientists were skeptical about the new initiative. "In 1997, I gave a talk at the N.I.H. outlining the decisions the J.D.R.F. had made," Emily Spitzer told me. "A scientist from a prestigious university came up to me afterward and started yelling at me, saying that we didn't know what we were doing, that we were bound to fail, that you can't dictate the course of scientific discovery."



But the foundation's directors were prepared to invest hundreds of millions of dollars in islet transplantation, and they named four priorities: to refine the techniques of the transplant; to stop the autoimmune attack on the islet cells; to foster tolerance of the foreign cells in the recipient; and to cultivate a ready source of islets for the procedure. The J.D.R.F. established a number of research centers at prominent medical schools in the United States, including Harvard, the University of Washington in Seattle, and the University of California at San Francisco. Once again, however, a breakthrough occurred in Canada, at the University of Alberta.

Rajotte's research team was on the verge of shutting down when the university decided to turn to Dr. James Shapiro, a transplant surgeon in Edmonton, to revitalize the program. Shapiro had experimented with islet transplantation in small animals when he was a medical student in Newcastle, England, more than a decade earlier. At six feet two, with dark hair and glasses, Shapiro is an imposing figure, and he speaks in clipped sentences that suggest the speed at which his mind works. "Every experiment I did as a student was a failure," he said to me recently. "Moreover, I was told by my colleagues, 'The islet program is dead, collapsed. You're thirty-six, and this will be the end of your career. You're crazy to consider the university's offer!' " But, spurred by the challenge of finding a cure for a devastating disease, Shapiro accepted the offer.

In September, 1998, Shapiro and Jonathan Lakey, another young scientist in Edmonton, flew to Giessen, Germany, where the international registry of islet transplantation is kept. "We stared and stared in detail at the records of each of the four hundred and fifty failures in diabetes," Shapiro recalled. These results contrasted sharply with a seventy-per-cent success rate of islet transplantation among patients who suffered from chronic inflammation of the pancreas but did not have Type 1 diabetes. In these cases, the procedure involved removing the patient's pancreas, obtaining a large number of islets from it in the laboratory, and then infusing the cells back into the patient. No immunosuppressive medications were necessary, since the patient was receiving his own cells. Shapiro and Lakey surmised that the immunosuppressive drugs given to diabetics, particularly corticosteroids, were lethal to the transplanted islets.

They explored the idea of using a combination of newer immunosuppressive medications, such as tacrolimus and sirolimus, but found that many were considered incompatible. “It was an absolute no-no in the field to pair drugs like tacrolimus and sirolimus,” Shapiro told me. One day, however, he came across reports from researchers in Halifax, Nova Scotia, who had concluded that, at least in mice, these new drugs could be mixed. Still, Shapiro knew that many experiments that had succeeded with mice failed with people.

“My intuition, when I stood at the bedside of patients, was that no animal model was going to predict what might work for humans,” he told me. “I knew that we had one shot in Edmonton to make islet transplantation work. There was no time to change one variable and then another variable and then another and come up with the answer.”

“Hey, look, before this goes any further, I should probably tell you we’re married.”

Lakey took charge of the effort to obtain large numbers of healthy islets to transplant. A former student of Rajotte’s, Lakey had been working on islet-cell extraction since his undergraduate days, in the mid-eighties. He believed that the transplants were failing because the patients had not received a sufficient number of high-quality islet cells. In partnership with the medical-technology company Roche Diagnostics, and researchers at the University of Miami, Lakey developed a mixture of enzymes which broke down the tissue of the pancreas efficiently, freeing the embedded islets without injuring them. The marketing department at Roche called this enzyme mixture Liberase.

In Edmonton, Lakey and Shapiro used the enzyme mixture to extract large numbers of intact islets. And they decided to administer the new, allegedly incompatible cocktail of drugs that had been endorsed by the researchers in Halifax.

Before they could proceed, members of the hospital’s ethics committee had to approve the project. “Yes, there had been four hundred and fifty prior failures of islet transplantation, and this gave everyone pause,” Shapiro told me. He pointed out to the committee that some people with Type 1 diabetes experience severe drops in their blood sugar. A complication called hypoglycemia unawareness, which prevents them from sensing the usual warning signs of a dangerous fall in blood sugar—sweating, dizziness, nausea, palpitations—can make these drops deadly. Shapiro argued that for such diabetics the danger of falling into a coma was greater than any risks inherent in the new treatment. Persuaded by this argument, the committee permitted the trial to proceed.

On March 11, 1999, Bryon Best, a fifty-four-year-old teacher from Yellowknife, in Canada’s Northwest Territories, was the first person to receive an islet transplant that employed the drugs and the novel techniques devised by Lakey and Shapiro. Within a week of his second transplant, Best, who had suffered a lifetime of wildly fluctuating blood-sugar levels, required no further insulin shots, and he was able to maintain a steady glucose count. Over the next year, six more patients underwent what became known as the Edmonton protocol. The transplants worked for all of them.

Shortly before Thanksgiving of 2001, Dana Shields enrolled in an experimental trial at the J.D.R.F. Center at Harvard, which used the Edmonton protocol. For this study, the pool of patients had been expanded to include diabetics who were not experiencing life-threatening episodes of hypoglycemia. In Edmonton, Lakey and Shapiro had carried out more than two dozen transplants, with enduring success for all but four patients, who had had to begin insulin injections again, two years later. It seemed likely that in these four patients the transplanted islets were suffering a slow attrition. The researchers were still looking for the right balance of drugs that would enable doctors to implant foreign islet cells without putting the patient at unnecessary risk of infection. To be considered for the Harvard experiment, the patient had to have received a kidney transplant and be taking immunosuppressive drugs. Dana, who qualified on both counts, signed an informed-consent document, which warned her that the treatment did not guarantee improvement and put the patient at risk of side effects, including hemorrhage, thrombosis, and infection.

The center's director, Dr. Hugh Auchincloss, weaned Dana from her conventional immunosuppressive drugs and put her on the Edmonton cocktail. And then, along with six other study subjects, she waited. The next step required the donation of a healthy pancreas from a person whose cause of death permitted the extraction of islet cells.

In May of 2002, Dana had the first of two islet-cell transplants, at Massachusetts General Hospital; the procedure went well, and two months later she received a call telling her that it was time for the second transplant. She was taken to a radiology suite, where a technician arrived with a small plastic bag that held the purified islet preparation—a grainy suspension with a yellowish tint that came from a donor whose blood type matched Dana's. The small plastic packet was connected to a catheter that led into the portal vein. As nurses monitored Dana's vital signs and glucose levels, the islet cells percolated through the catheter and into her bloodstream.

The entire procedure took less than thirty minutes. When it was over, Dana experienced some lingering nausea from the anesthetic and had to lie still on her right side for four hours. "Otherwise," she recalled, "I felt great." She had had her last insulin dose at eleven o'clock the night before. Four weeks later, Dana told me that she had not needed a single insulin injection since the completion of the transplant.

Three and a half years after Bryon Best had the first successful human islet-cell transplant, in Edmonton, more than a hundred and fifty patients have gone through the experimental protocol. The trials are funded by both the J.D.R.F. and the N.I.H. During the Clinton Administration, Congress significantly increased financial support for research into Type 1 diabetes, thanks, in part, to Erskine Bowles, the White House chief of staff, and Newt Gingrich, the former Speaker of the House of Representatives, both of whom have relatives with diabetes. But the procedure is still unavailable to most diabetes patients. There are only about six thousand organ donors a year in the United States, and, of these, only about twenty-five hundred provide what are called "good" pancreases. Two or more pancreases are generally required to obtain enough islets for each recipient. Given the fact that a million Americans suffer from Type 1 diabetes, each year only one or two patients in every thousand could have the procedure.

The short-term solution to the problem is to increase the efficiency of the islet-extraction process. With the sponsorship of the J.D.R.F., Shapiro, Lakey, and their co-workers are trying to maximize the yield of islets from a single donated pancreas. But, even with an increase in yield, the great majority of Type 1 diabetics will remain untreated.

In the longer term, scientists are increasingly looking to mass-produce islets from stem cells, in the laboratory. This can be done either by identifying the adult stem cells that make islets or by training primitive embryonic stem cells to become islets.

One of the leaders in embryonic stem-cell research is Douglas Melton, a professor in the Department of Molecular and Cellular Biology at Harvard and a member of its J.D.R.F. Center. Ten years ago, Melton was studying how frogs develop. Then his six-month-old son, Sam, was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes. Melton began to focus on how the different cells in the pancreas develop from primitive embryonic stem cells. Because stem cells have an apparently unlimited potential to grow and differentiate, they could provide a robust supply of islet cells. Furthermore, because stem cells are "all-purpose" cells, from which all tissues of the body develop, scientists could conceivably genetically alter them to make them impervious to autoimmune attack. Islet-cell transplants could one day be performed without patients having to wait for altruistic families to donate organs, and recipients would not have to take risky immunosuppressive drugs.

In 1994, during the Clinton Administration, the N.I.H.'s Human Embryo Research Panel, which included scientists and ethicists, concluded that stem-cell research involving human embryos, such as those created during in-vitro fertilization, should be made available for research supported by federal funds. Five

A VIEW OF HOME

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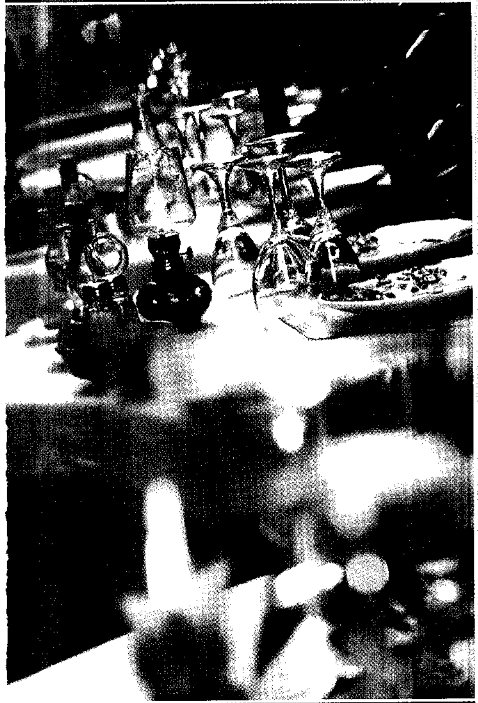

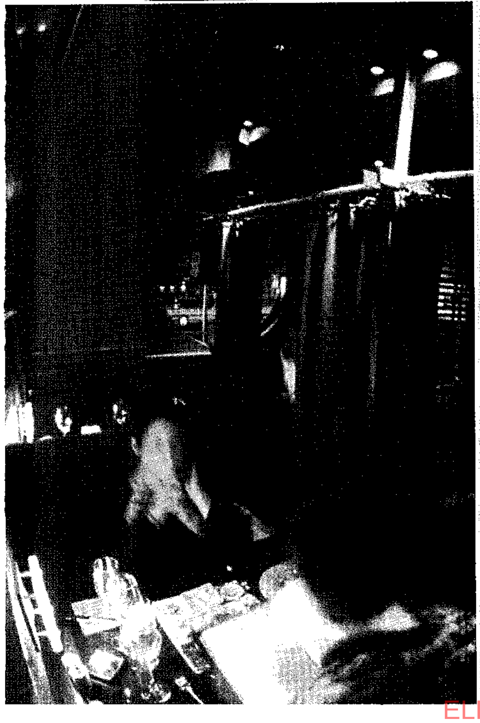

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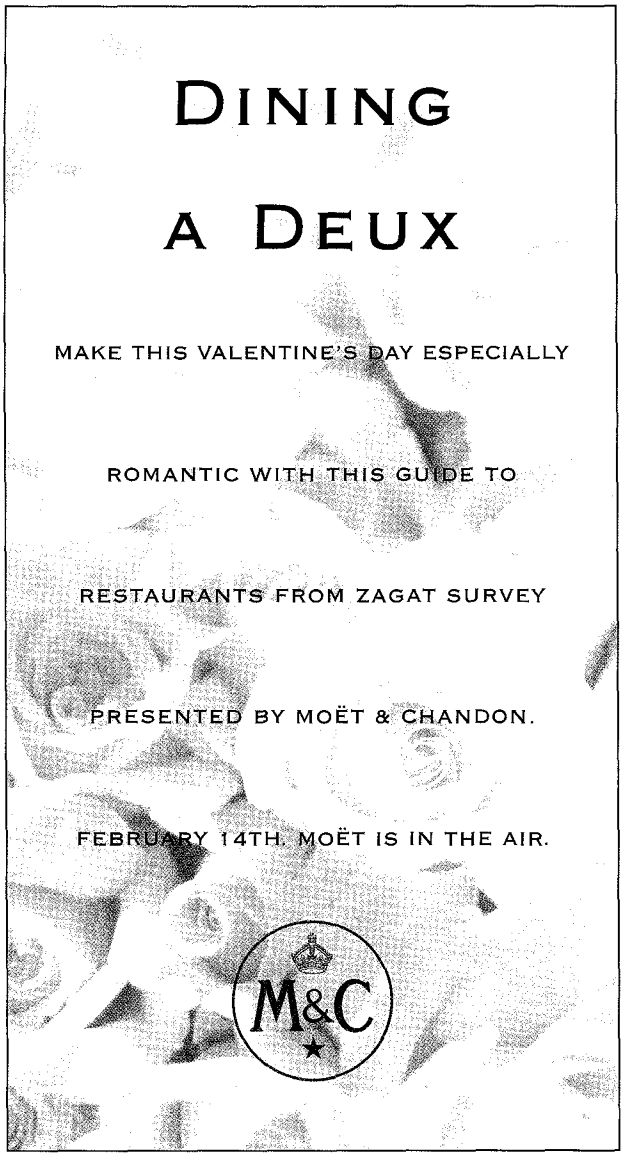

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■ "Another good" "steak-and-seafood" "joint" (just "how many does Chicago deserve?"), this River North "noteworthy newcomer" serves up "classy comfort food" "with winning service" in an "attractive room"; supporters claim owner "Glen Keefer is a pro" and say chef John "Hogan's a hero", crediting the duo for making it not only a "bright new star on the scene" but an "in-spot for TV and radio personalities" as well.

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■ A showcase for "talented chef" Roland Liccioni's "exciting", "visually stimulating" and "sensational" New French prix fixe-only menus, this popular spot is revered by well-heeled wanderers as an "oasis of refinement"; though it's no longer a private "club", "you'll feel a little privileged to be seated" within its "formal" yet "lovely Streeterville townhouse" setting where "needs are anticipated" by a "professional" staff; P.S. the wine collection is "stupendous."

Ritz-Carlton Dining Room S 28 27 28 $68
Ritz-Carlton Hotel, 160 E. Pearson St. (Michigan Ave.), 312-573-5223
■ A "top dining experience" awaits at this "refined" New French in the Ritz-Carlton, a Four Seasons hotel; chef "Sarah Stegner is a treasure", and her "fantastic" food matches the "posh" yet "understated" surroundings; add in an "epic wine list", absolutely fabulous "cheese cart" and Sunday brunch that's a "food orgy with piano" and this is "the place to splurge" "when elegance, not money, is the object."

Ritz-Carlton Dining Room

LOS ANGELES

Brasserie des Artistes 18 14 17 $33
8300 Wilshire Blvd. (San Vicente Blvd.), Beverly Hills, 323-655-6196
■ "Transplants" say "don't miss the mussels and fries", "hanger steak that's a real treat" and monthly regional food-and-wine pairings at this "unpretentious", "genuinely French" bistro located at a busy Beverly Hills intersection; those nostalgic for "tunes á la Edith Piaf" should come for karaoke on Fridays and Saturdays.

La Cachette

Capo 26 24 23 $64
1810 Ocean Ave. (Pico Blvd.), Santa Monica, 310-394-5550
■ Chef-owner Bruce Marder knows how to use the local "Farmers Market", is a "fanatic for the best ingredients" and understands Italian food better than most native chefs" pronounce fans of his homey, "romantic" Santa Monica "special-dinner" venue where if you "bring your Brinks truck" you'll be rewarded with "excellent" cuisine (much of it from an open grill) and an "extensive wine list."

Four Oaks S 23 24 22 $52
2181 N. Beverly Glen Blvd. (bet. Mulholland Dr. & Sunset Blvd.), Bel Air, 310-470-2265
◩ "Can I live here" or at least "on the patio"? plead patrons who pine over this Bel Air "hideaway's" "serene", "rustic" setting, far removed "from the craziness of LA" and so "romantic" you

"always think you're going to see a marriage proposal"; not to be overshadowed is toque Peter Roelant, whose "delicious", "cosmopolitan" French cuisine is presented well by a "knowledgeable" staff; more lukewarm types find it "overpriced" and in need of "modernizing that wouldn't jeopardize its country feel."

La Cachette S 27 24 24 $54
10506 Little Santa Monica Blvd. (bet. Beverly Glen Blvd. & Overland Ave.), Century City, 310-470-4992
■ "Chef-owner Jean François Meteigner creates brilliant, light New French dishes (not an oxymoron)" employing fine Gallic ingredients (snails, frogs' legs, foie gras) at this "hard-to-find" "special-occasion" "gem" in Century City; no doubt "your date will be impressed" sitting at a "well-spaced table" amid "nice artwork", while enjoying a "memorable meal" (on you!) served by an "attentive but unobtrusive" staff; P.S. "save room for the warm fruit tarts."

Miró S 25 27 23 $62
Bacara Resort & Spa, 8301 Hollister Ave. (101 Frwy.), Santa Barbara, 805-968-0100
■ Asking for a seat with a view is a moot point at this airy, art-filled Cal-French newcomer where almost every table has a view of the ocean and the "marvelous" staff emerges with chef Remi Lauvand's handiwork on dinnerware that replicates the work of the namesake artist; "the great wine list" is another reason this is "a real hit in all respects."

MIAMI

Azul 25 27 25 $63
Mandarin Oriental Hotel, 500 Brickell Key Dr. (8th St.), 305-913-8358
■ One of Miami's "latest must-try" spots is this "terrific" two-year-old in the "super-beautiful" Mandarin Oriental Hotel on Biscayne Bay, where chef Michelle Bernstein, formerly of Tantra, "seldom falls" from the culinary "high wire" with her "stellar" "French-Caribbean fusion" fare with Asian accents; the "bare sophistication of the decor" and the "food mood" are so "Zen" that, despite what some call "outlandish prices", "it's a soothing experience."

Baleen S 25 27 22 $54
Grove Isle Hotel, 4 Grove Isle Dr. (S. Bayshore Dr.), Coconut Grove, 305-858-8300
■ For "the most beautiful view in all of Miami", "get a table outside and dine under the stars" on "breezy Biscayne Bay" at this "dazzling" New World seafood house in the Grove Isle Hotel; the "breathtaking setting" (it has a "whimsical" simian theme) is as "magical" as the "sumptuous" fare, but Robbin Haas is no longer the chef so time will tell if his followers can tap his talents.

Blue Door ◐ S 24 27 21 $59
Delano Hotel, 1685 Collins Ave. (17th St.), Miami Beach, 305-674-6400
◪ Awash with "celebrities galore" and draped by Philippe Starck in "breezy, white, ceiling-to-floor curtains", "this chic spot in the Delano Hotel" feels like a "luxurious movie set", but the "dreamy" digs and "happening" "scene" don't "distract from the excellent" New French "seafood-heavy menu"; still, critics complain that "fantasy meets reality" when the big bill comes; N.B. the new prix fixe menu (under $50) is a boon for the budget conscious.

Forge, The S 25 26 24 $55
432 Arthur Godfrey Rd. (Royal Palm Ave.), Miami Beach, 305-538-8533
◪ Over the past three decades, this "costly", "classic" Continental chophouse "institution" with "stained glass" galore and a "'60s Miami Beach" vibe has forged its role as the "traditional place" for "old-fashioned, high-end dining"; "Caesar salad and prime rib are the stars" ("no calorie counting here") and the "museum of a cellar" houses "the Mona Lisas of wines", so "go and splurge"; N.B. exotic dancers have been known to perform, so call ahead if that kind of entertainment isn't for you.

NEW YORK

Four Seasons 26 27 26 $78
99 E. 52nd St. (bet. Lexington & Park Aves.), 212-754-9494
■ "Like a Chanel suit", this "timeless" Midtown classic "lives up to its reputation" as an "architectural and gastronomical wonder" that "never goes out of style", thanks to the "sublime" Philip Johnson-designed space, "brilliant" Continental fare and deft, "mature" service; its Pool Room is "romantic" enough to "bring on tears", while the "elegant" Grill Room is "best for lunch and [guaranteed] celebrity-spotting"; in short, this is "ultimate NY dining"–"just find a way to expense it."

Lespinasse 27 27 26 $95
St. Regis Hotel, 2 E. 55th St. (bet. 5th & Madison Aves.), 212-339-6719
■ Like a premature "taste of heaven", this "exquisite" Midtown French "masterpiece" exhausts "superlatives" with a "phenomenal" display of "creative" finesse from chef Christian Delouvrier, "flawless" service from a "staff with ESP" and a Louis XV "regal" dining room that's a "gorgeous" "place to propose or celebrate" any type of deal; of course, all these luxuries may require "breaking the bank", but it's "definitely worth" it.

One If By Land, TIBS S 25 27 25 $70
17 Barrow St. (bet. 7th Ave. S. & W. 4th St.), 212-228-0822
■ "Romance abounds" ("heard two marriage proposals during dinner") at this candlelit "historic" Village landmark that once was Aaron Burr's carriage house; adorned with a balcony, fireplace, beautiful flowers and lilting music, it almost seems superfluous to mention that prix fixes are "just about perfect" and served by staffers who "thoroughly spoil" you; but, while taking the loan to buy her ring, you'd better borrow extra to cover dinner.

Town S 24 25 22 $67
Chambers Hotel, 15 W. 56th St. (bet. 5th & 6th Aves.), 212-582-4445
■ "A hit" from day one, this Midtowner is where "beautiful people", "power expense-accounters" and "serious diners" sip "trendy" cocktails at the "cool bar" then descend to an "ultra-modern" dining room to partake in Geoffrey Zakarian's "superb" New American cooking; no surprise–it's always "packed" and "expensive."

SAN FRANCISCO

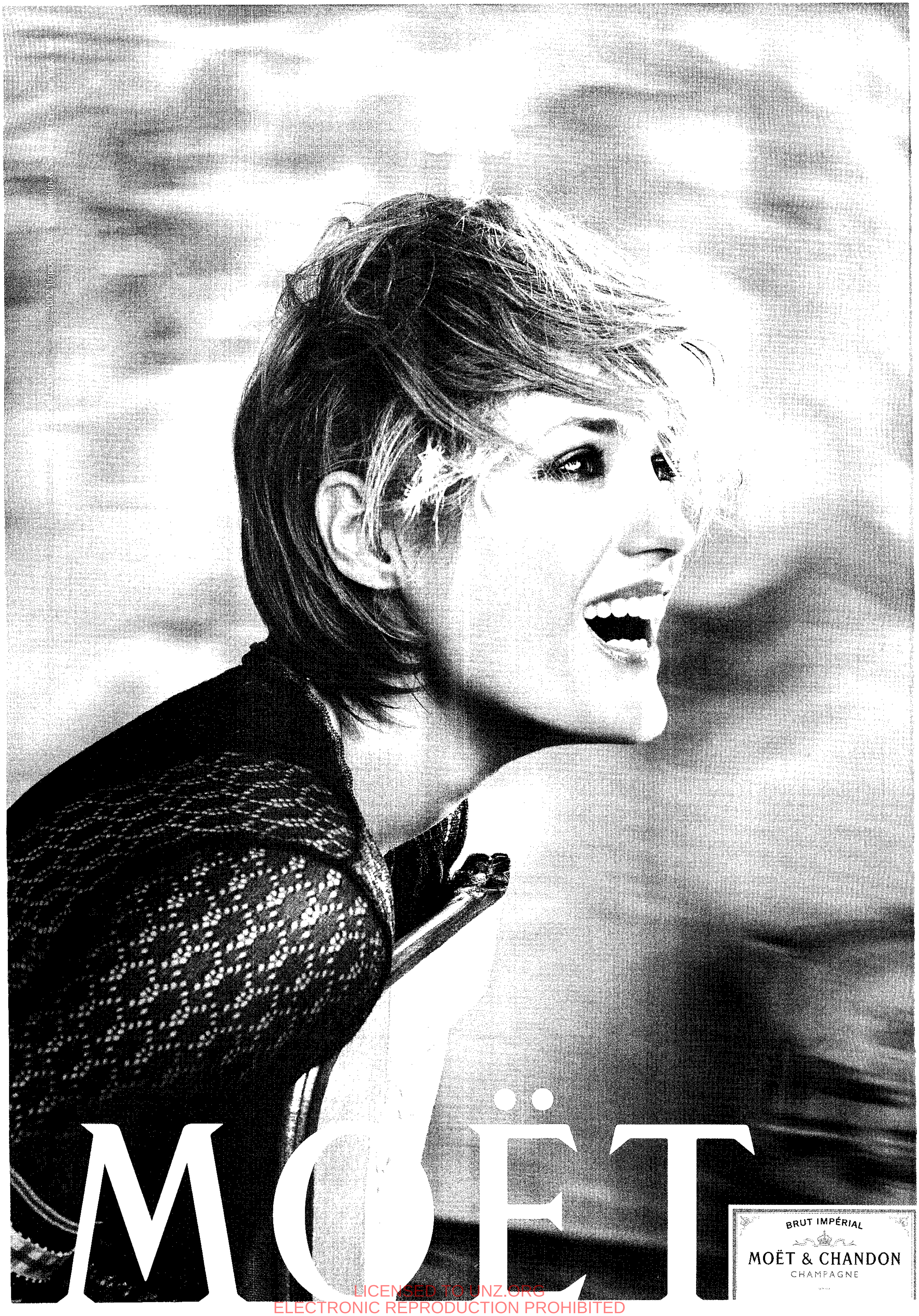
Azie S 21 23 18 $51
826 Folsom St. (bet. 4th & 5th Sts.), 415-538-0918
◪ "The way cool" scene (think "dark lighting, curtained booths") is "worth the price of admission" at this "stunning", "sensual" SoMa spot that features "artfully presented" Asian-New French dishes meant to be shared "family-style" and "timely service"; although "teensy-weensy portions" ("the Nine Bites [sampler] is more like 4.5 bites") are a drawback, "prices have been lowered now that the bloom is off the dot-com rose."

Compass Rose S ▼ 14 26 18 $33
Westin St. Francis Hotel, 335 Powell St. (Geary St.), 415-774-0167
◪ Whether you're looking for the "perfect place" to enjoy "fabulous high tea" "after a day of shopping" or an "old-time cocktail lounge" to "sip champagne" and soak up a "wonderful cross section of people", you just can't beat the "ambiance and elegance" of this "beautiful" grand salon Downtown, where "the teapot is consistently full", the staff consistently "accommodating" and the live jazz always "tops"–all of which "more than makes up" for the "pricey, mundane" Asian-Continental cuisine.

Postrio S 24 24 22 $56
Prescott Hotel, 545 Post St. (bet. Mason & Taylor Sts.), 415-776-7825
◪ This Downtown "classic" remains a "favorite stop for the stars" and "visitors from far and near who are entertained" first by that "elegant entry staircase" and then by the "inventive combinations" of New American-Far Eastern fare and "the show in the [open] kitchen"; a few claim it's "coasting on its laurels"–in particular, the "late '80s decor" "needs a face-lift"–but most say it "still has it"; P.S. "the Wolfgang Puck pizzas are not to be missed."

Shanghai 1930 17 21 17 $39
133 Steuart St. (bet. Howard & Mission Sts.), 415-896-5600
◪ "Drenched with Jazz Age" Asian atmosphere, this "glamorous, sexy" SoMa supper club "is a transporting place to stop for a cocktail" and some "haute Chinese" cuisine; however a drop in the Food score supports sentiments about "so-so fare", and other shafted surveyors feel "shanghaied" by slow service, suggesting this may be a "relic of another bygone era–that of the dot-com."

Silks S 24 24 23 $56
Mandarin Oriental Hotel, 222 Sansome St. (California St.), 415-986-2020
■ This "formal hotel dining room" Downtown "is the consummate corporate lunch" place, with "elegant, refined" decor ("lots of room between tables"), "impeccable" service and "creative Asian-inspired" Cal cuisine; many mourn it still "does not get the recognition it deserves"–though that makes it work "for a quiet evening alone with a loved one" as well.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years later, as the Administration, in the face of opposition from pro-life activists, was reconsidering this recommendation, Melton testified before a Senate appropriations subcommittee.

Melton, a soft-spoken man with thick black hair, now graying, and large rimless glasses, presented himself not as a renowned scientist but as the father of a child with diabetes. "Before discussing the exciting potential of stem-cell research, allow me to speak briefly as a parent," he said to the subcommittee. "My wife is regularly up in the late hours of the night doing blood checks while Sam sleeps. We wonder, Is his blood sugar too low? Will he find the middle ground between a 'low,' or coma, and being too 'high' in the morning? I can't recall a night since Sam was diagnosed when we slept peacefully, free of the worry that the balance between his food, insulin, and exercise was not good enough. I am unwilling to accept the enormity of his medical and psychological burden, and I am personally devoted to bringing it to an end for Sam and all Type 1 diabetics. I implore you to continue to make it possible to cure diabetes, for diabetics and their families."

A "compromise" announced by President Bush in August, 2001—which allows the government to fund work with stem-cell lines that were created before the decision but blocks funding for work on cell lines obtained subsequently—has made it difficult for such research to flourish. The number and the quality of human stem cells available for government-funded research became sharply limited. In frustration, Melton, with money from the J.D.R.F. and the Howard Hughes Medical Institute, established an independent laboratory for stem-cell research; his work can now continue unhindered by federal restrictions.

I visited Melton's laboratory not long after Dana Shields's transplant. In the human-stem-cell facility, four incubators held primitive embryonic stem cells in petri dishes. (The donors had specifically designated the fertilized eggs for diabetes research.) Melton put one of the petri dishes under a special microscope. At the bottom of the petri dish was a flat bed of cells, the "feeder layer," which supports the embryonic stem cells. The stem cells were growing in a tightly clustered ball that looked like an expanding nebula. I asked how long it might take for scientists to devise a way to turn stem cells into islet cells that can sense glucose levels and produce insulin. "I don't think it will happen before two or three years," Melton said. "But it is something to be pursued non-stop. Embryonic stem cells have the greatest potential of any cell type to regenerate tissues."

Meanwhile, researchers are looking for other solutions to the shortage of donated pancreases. "No one knows what will solve the islet-supply problem," Hugh Auchincloss, of Harvard, told me. His own research involves a strategy that he calls "xenotransplantation," in which islets from animals such as pigs would be used for human transplants. But increasing the supply of islet cells is only half the solution. The larger aim is to transplant cells that will be "tolerated" in their new home, so that patients can end their dependency on immunosuppressive drugs.

In 1998, the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, under Dr. Anthony Fauci, established the Immune Tolerance Network, an organization of researchers who conduct innovative studies that could lead to clinical experiments in which the human immune system is "educated" to accept foreign transplants. (Some of the costs are paid by the J.D.R.F.) Scientists hope that training the immune system may help not only patients with Type 1 diabetes but also those afflicted with other disorders related to immune-system dysfunction, such as multiple sclerosis and asthma. Last May, Jeffrey Bluestone, the director of the I.T.N. and the head of the University of California at San Francisco Diabetes Center, announced that treating recently diagnosed diabetics with an antibody against T cells not only tempered the autoimmune attack but preserved insulin production in the remaining unharmed islets, for up to a year.

Four months after Dana Shields received the transplant of islet cells, we met in my office. "Now that I no longer take insulin," she said, "I have so much extra energy I told my husband that they need to put me on Valium. It's as if I had been carrying around weights that were suddenly removed. I feel free for the first time in thirty years." ♦

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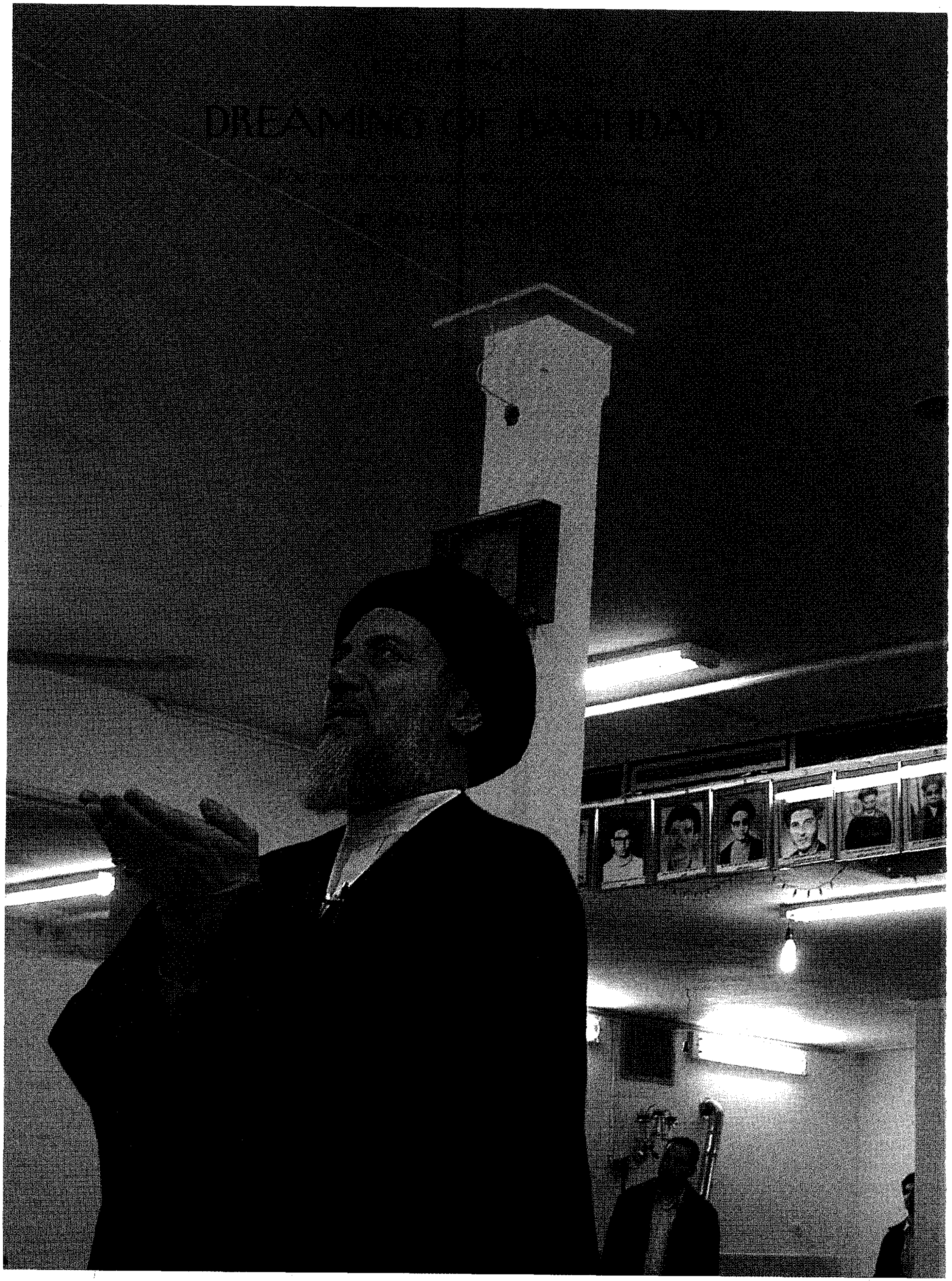
Edna O'Brien
Bruce McCall
Maira Kalman
and more

AND: A calendar of *New Yorker* events across the country

DREAMING OF BAGHDAD



Ayatollah Muhammad Bakr al-Hakim, the exiled Iraqi Shia leader, in Qom, Iran, with photographs of relatives killed by Sadda

ussein. Photograph by Thomas Dworzak.

Tehran is an enormous city, and the roads tangled through and around it are filled with cars barrelling along at high speeds, straddling dividing lines, and running red lights. The plethora of automobiles, which are fuelled by gas sold at government-subsidized prices, makes for hellish smog and traffic jams. After a particularly nasty crash recently—one that required a helicopter rescue squad—cars were backed up for four miles. Young boys darted among them, hawking newspapers and bouquets of fresh-cut white tuberoses, narcissi, and red roses to frustrated drivers. Iranians are fond of flowers. Grimy billboards and murals painted on the sides of buildings often have floral motifs. Tulips float through vaguely celestial backgrounds in scenes that depict prominent martyrs or the late Ayatollah Khomeini. One billboard shows a blissful boy of about fourteen, kneeling in a field of wildflowers, his head leaning against his rifle. He wears the black headband of a *basiji*, one of the young volunteers who ran by the tens of thousands onto mined battlefields during the war with Iraq in the nineteen-eighties.

Many of the *basijis* are buried in the Behesht-e-Zahra cemetery, on the outskirts of the city, a large section of which is dedicated to Iran's martyrs. I went there one day and wandered among the gravestones and altars. A few families, but mostly groups of women, were picnicking; other people collected water in jugs from spigots to wash the tombs. It was a Thursday, the day when Shiites customarily give out sweets in honor of the Hidden Imam, who they believe will reappear shortly before the Final Judgment and the end of history, and women in black chadors offered passersby little cakes and candy from paper boxes.

The next day, I attended Friday prayers in a large, open-sided structure on the grounds of Tehran University, where sermons are delivered by high-ranking Shia clerics. The sermons are about politics as well as religion, and provide useful insights into the current views of Iran's ayatollahs. The day I was there, the sermon was delivered by Ayatollah Mohammad Yazdi, one of the twelve members of the Council of Guardians, which insures that all government legislation adheres to the council's interpretation of Islamic sharia law. Security was tight. We were frisked, and bags were put through metal detectors. Yazdi was well into a harangue by the time the three or four thousand faithful, mostly older men, had filled the place. A small group of women were sequestered nearby, behind a partition.

"The first and most important victory of the revolution," Yazdi said, "was the unity of the Iranian people. And that is what Imam Khomeini always wanted. But now our enemies are trying to divide us." The crowd chanted "*Allahu Akbar!*"—"God is great!"—three times, in a great baritone roar, and then "Khomeini is our leader." Yazdi went on, speaking about a bitter debate currently under way in the parliament between clerics and reformers. "The reformers want to define in a law what it is that constitutes a political crime. Well, for us in the Council of Guardians there can be differences of opinion within Islam, but no opposition to Islam. All those who oppose Islam are heretics."

Yazdi said that the religious segment of his sermon was over, and that he would turn to politics. He became more animated. "The only supporter of the U.S. in starting a new war in the region is Israel," he exclaimed. "And the only reason that I can see for this war is to gain control of the oil in the region and to oppose Islam." The crowd yelled "Death to America!" Yazdi continued, "Another goal is to distract international public opinion away from the Palestinian issue. Bush and Sharon are among the most criminal characters in the world! We hope that their crimes may be blocked by the Islamic movements in the region."

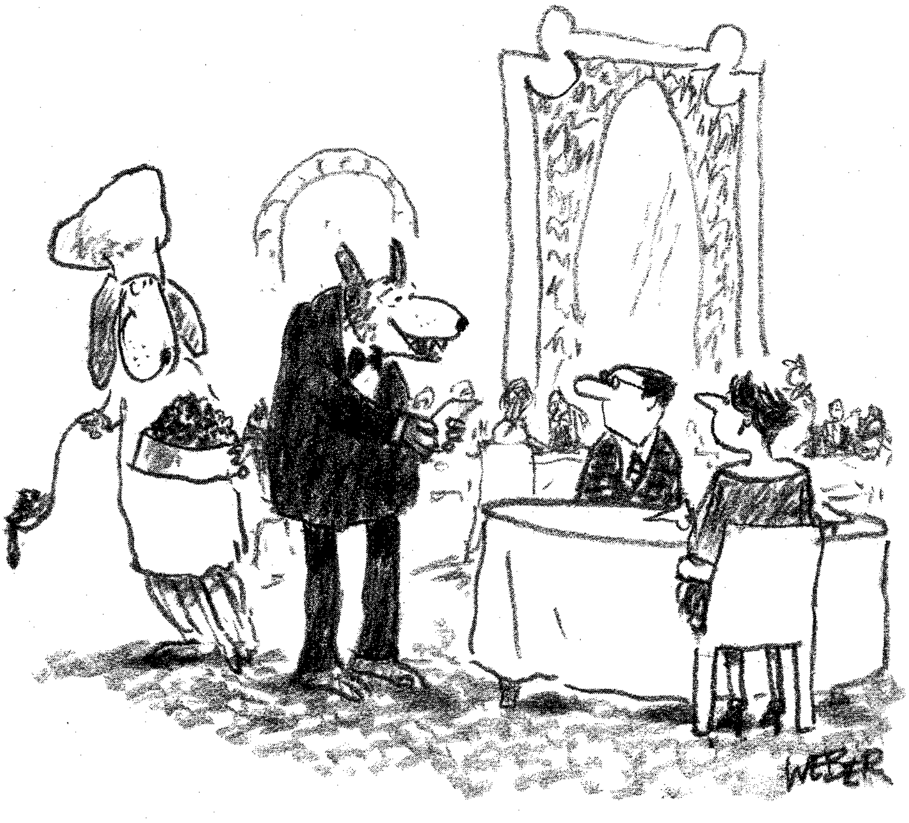
Yazdi spoke for about thirty minutes and then descended the stairs from the pulpit, flanked by bodyguards. The crowd shouted "Death to Israel!" as he walked to a cordoned-off V.I.P. section, where several dozen high-ranking clerics and government officials knelt on a carpet. Yazdi climbed down into a recess in the floor in front of them and began to pray. All the men followed suit, standing and kneeling repeatedly, their heads bowed. The man just behind Yazdi, in the front row of the

MAGNUM

V.I.P. section, was Ayatollah Muhammad Bakr al-Hakim, the exiled head of the Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq, or SCIRI. Hakim leaned forward on his knees and touched his forehead to a small tablet of pressed earth from the Iraqi holy city of Najaf, where he was born and where Ayatollah Khomeini lived for fourteen years, after the Shah expelled him from Iran in 1964.

Hakim went into exile in Iran in 1980, a year after Saddam Hussein became President of Iraq and Khomeini returned triumphantly to Iran as the country's Supreme Leader. Hakim's father was the Grand Ayatollah of the Shiites, who make up about sixty per cent of the Iraqi population (and about ninety per cent of Iranians), and he had been at odds with the secular government of Iraq since the nineteen-fifties. Several of his students founded Al Dawa, a party dedicated to the establishment of an Islamic state in Iraq and opposed to the rising Baath and Communist Parties. The Baath Party, which came to power in 1968, was controlled by Sunni Arabs from provinces in northwestern Iraq—among them Saddam Hussein—who had strong kinship ties and little regard for the values of religious Shiites. In 1969, Hakim's father issued a fatwa against membership in the Baath Party. The younger Hakim was imprisoned and tortured for Islamist activity. In the nineteen-eighties, after he fled to Iran, he organized a militia made up of other Iraqi exiles and Army deserters and sent them to fight on the side of the Iranians in the war against Iraq. More than a hundred members of his family still in Iraq were subsequently arrested and tortured, and many of them were killed.

Hakim's followers have been waging a low-level war of ambushes, sabotage, and assassinations against Saddam Hussein's regime for twenty years. In late February, 1991, when the Iraqi Army was retreating from Kuwait and the first President Bush encouraged Iraqis to rise up against Saddam, implying that America would back a rebellion, Hakim's militia crossed the border into southern Iraq. They occupied Basra during the brief intifada that broke out among Iraqi Shiites. When American support didn't materialize and the intifada was viciously suppressed, Hakim's men went back to Iran. Recently, and perhaps anomalously, given the anti-American environment in which he has lived for some time, Hakim has been discussing regime change in Iraq with the current Bush Administration. In August, his brother, Abdulaziz, who is SCIRI's military chief of staff, represented him in Washington during meetings between Iraqi opposition groups and U.S. officials. Abdulaziz was also a prominent figure in the Iraqi-opposition conference in London in mid-December, and SCIRI and Bush's people have continued to discuss what kind of relationship Hakim's militia might have with the Americans in the event of a war in Iraq. "We have our own plan to change the regime, and we've talked about that to Mr. Cheney and Mr. Rumsfeld," Abdulaziz said to me. "And we are still talking to them about it."



"Please listen carefully, as the menu has changed."

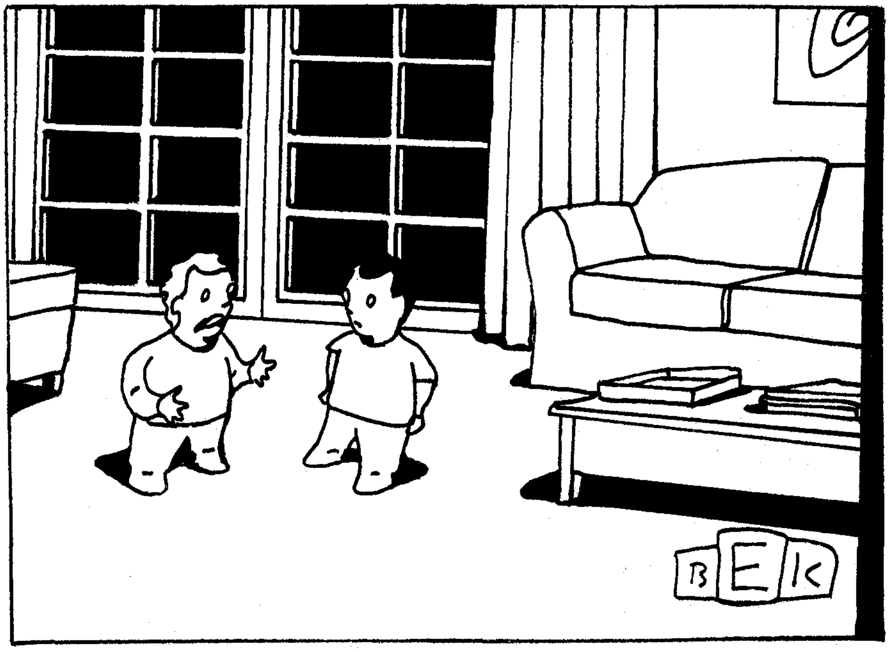
Ayatollah Hakim—he is an ayatollah by virtue of being a high-level Shiite clergyman—is now sixty-three. He has a long, pale face with aquiline features, large brown eyes, and a gray beard. He wears black or brown robes over a gray cleric's tunic and the black turban of a *sayyid*, a direct descendant of the Prophet. I met him at the SCIRI headquarters in Tehran a few days after Ayatollah Yazdi's prayer service. The SCIRI offices are on a main street in the center of the city, in a four-story concrete building with slanting, perforated steel plates on the windows. The men at the reception desk speak Arabic, not Iranian Farsi, and the guards, although they look like Iranian soldiers, are Iraqis: Hakim's mujahideen.

My bag was searched, and I was escorted to a room with faux-Persian carpets and floral-print couches and chairs. A vase with plastic flowers had been placed on a small table. Practically the only other decorative touch was a framed phrase from the Koran written in gold script on a black background. Hakim sat in a chair next to me, with his interpreter on the other side. He has a lively manner and the expression of someone who is amused by much of what he sees. He didn't speak English, but I could tell that he understood a lot of what I said, because he would listen carefully and nod before he had got a translation. I asked him what he thought about an American-led war in Iraq, and he replied in a deep voice. "The U.S. says it wants to change the regime and establish a democracy in Iraq," he said. "But there is some ambiguity in its policy. Will the Americans stay on in Iraq or will they let the Iraqi people run their own affairs?" He said he wasn't particularly skeptical about the Americans' immediate intentions, even given what happened in 1991, when Bush senior let the intifada down. He smiled and shook his head from side to side when he talked about that. "After the liberation of Kuwait, the U.S. changed its mind and ended up supporting Saddam," he said. "This is a source of anxiety for Iraqis. But now we see that there is a new American seriousness about the change of regime in Iraq. What we worry about is what comes after the change." He was somewhat evasive about the discussions that he was having with the U.S., but reminded me that opposition leaders at the conference in London in December had agreed on a pluralistic political system for post-Saddam Iraq. Any future government, he said, would be composed of all of Iraq's ethnic groups, and would "respect Islam." He said, "Sharia should be the basis for legislation. Everybody has agreed on this," adding, a little defensively, I thought, "Other countries of the region, for instance Jordan and Egypt, also use sharia law."

The militia that Hakim formed after Saddam invaded Iran—in September, 1980, setting off one of the bloodiest and most prolonged wars of the twentieth century—was called the Badr Brigade. The Battle of Badr, which took place in the year 624, was the first battle fought in the name of Islam. Ali, Muhammad's son-in-law and the founding figure of the Shia faith, defeated a band of infidels at Badr, a village south of Medina. When Hakim's men occupied Basra during the intifada in 1991, they declared an Islamic Republic. Hakim is close to Iran's hard-line conservative Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, and the Badr Brigade, which has secret bases and cells in Iraq and Iran, operates under the auspices of Iran's Revolutionary Guard. Some Iranians believe that the Badr Brigade acts as a vigilante group for Khamenei. A number of times last year, Arabic-speaking militiamen broke up gatherings of pro-democracy students in Tehran, which is one reason that Hakim isn't particularly popular among liberal Iranian intellectuals.

Nevertheless, it appears that Hakim has become more pragmatic than he was in the past. The appeal of political Islam has dwindled considerably in Iran, and in the last two general elections clerics were trounced by Iranian reformers. He said to me that his views hadn't changed, although SCIRI occasionally made political compromises. "Our relationships with the world were very limited before the Gulf War," he said. "Since then, we've been able to develop many new relationships. But it was never our idea to copy Iran's revolution. Our idea of an Islamic revolution started long before Iran's."

An Iranian reformist politician said that Hakim might be "evolving," but that he couldn't really admit it. "He couldn't openly deny seeking a religious state while he is still inside Iran," the politician explained, "because he is militarily, financially, and in most others ways supported by the Islamic leadership."



"Now there's all this mythology about how I'm crabby."

• •

Ayatollah Hakim's brother, Abdulaziz, invited me to a meeting with members of Tehran's exile community in a *husseiniyah*, a Shia meeting hall, in Dawlat Abad, a predominantly Iraqi, working-class neighborhood at the southern edge of the city. I was handed a cloth bag in which to put my shoes, and went into a large room with walls draped in russet-colored, gold-embossed cloth, where a couple of hundred men were sitting around on a carpeted floor. The roof of the hall had several domes and was hung with brightly lit chandeliers. The men, some of whom had small boys with them, were listening attentively to Abdulaziz, who was dressed like his brother and looked like him, except that his beard was shorter and he wore glasses. He was seated with his back to a wall, and a bodyguard sat on the floor on either side of him. Abdulaziz has survived two recent assassination attempts.

My translator was a gentle, soft-spoken Iraqi in his mid-thirties who had worked in the Oil Ministry in Baghdad until four years ago, when he and his family fled to Iran. He now

"She's promiscuous. She's in five book groups."

works in SCIRI's human-rights documentation center, collecting evidence against members of Saddam's regime for future war-crimes trials. He said that Abdulaziz had been summoned to the *husseiniyah* because the local community was anxious about the apparently imminent war. "You people must seize the first opportunity to be with our tribes, inside Iraq," Abdulaziz said to them. No one moved or spoke. Many of the men were fingering worry beads. A man next to me stroked the hair of his sleeping son, who was stretched across his knees.

The meeting was being shown live on an Internet Webcast, and Abdulaziz was taking questions from all over. He was asked if the U.S. would respect the resolutions made by the opposition parties at the conference in London in December. "Do we have assurances that they will do so?" he replied. "No. Can we stop the military attack by the United States? No. But after this conference the feelings of the Iraqi people have become much clearer to the rest of the world." Someone asked about the difficulty of dealing with the United States when it didn't have diplomatic relations with Iran, and Abdulaziz said pretty much what his brother had said to me, that American policy had changed since September 11th and that SCIRI had adjusted its position, and that it was respectful of Iran but independent of it. He gave a little pep talk about the Badr Brigade, which is estimated to have about ten thousand armed fighters. "There are a huge number of Badr inside Iraq, in Baghdad and the north, as well as in the southern provinces," he said. "And we have our connections. The vast majority of the Iraqi people support these forces. But Badr forces will never be used as a tool of any foreign power."

That morning, Abdulaziz had talked to me about "other ways of changing the regime." He said, "War must be the last choice. Just like surgery. You try other treatments first." Whether that meant an internal rebellion or something else was unclear. The Iranian government is officially against the war, because of the instability it would bring to the region, and the Iranians certainly don't want a puppet of the United States in nominal control of Baghdad. But the Shia exiles in Iran may have different views, which they have to be discreet about. Abdulaziz told a reporter for a Tehran newspaper recently that "the Iraqi people have been subject to so many years of harsh cruelty, oppression and apartheid . . . that they don't really care how and by whom" they are liberated. He frequently says that United Nations Resolution 688, which forbids the persecution of groups like the Kurds and the Shiites, should be enforced, but the no-fly zones were imposed to do that, and so, arguably, would an American invasion.

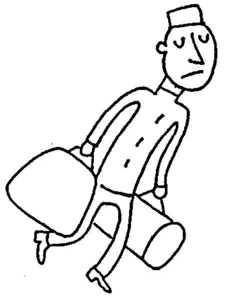
Abdulaziz was more specific about the weapons-inspection process. He claimed that SCIRI had information about Saddam's weapons of mass destruction that the U.N. was ignoring. A SCIRI official showed me some documents, written in Arabic, which I was told were signed by "a very high Iraqi official," whom he would not name. They were addressed to the commanders of key Iraqi military units. He said that one document was called "Instructions for Chemical Support," and was stamped "Very Confidential." He explained that the document had been issued a few months earlier and was intended to be used in the coming war. He said that it specifically mentioned American troops as the enemy. "It gives the names of units where chemical supplies can be obtained, and gives instructions on how to deal with a chemical war."

The SCIRI official said that Abdulaziz had taken copies of the documents to Washington: "We have many such documents, and we get more all the time." He pulled some papers out of a small pile he had on his desk. "Here is an example of one of our intelligence reports. This one mentions some of the steps being taken by the regime to hide illegal weapons." He began reading: "On the western side of the Fourth Army Corps base in Amara"—now called Maysan province, he explained in an aside—"such equipment has been put into big wooden boxes, painted with tar; some holes have been dug and they have buried them. The regime has also buried some long-range rockets in the town of Ali al-Sharqi in the same province. This was done in the firing range of the same camp of the Fourth Army Corps, but on the eastern side of the base." He explained that the report was a summary of raw intelligence dispatched regularly to Tehran by SCIRI agents operating inside Iraq. I asked him whether he could be sure that the intelligence was referring to weapons of mass destruction. "Well, they wouldn't have to put them in boxes and paint them with tar and hide them unless they were prohibited, would they?" he replied.

He turned back to the document and continued reading: "They have also hidden some equipment and rockets in the village called Al Awadi near the town and military base of Ali al-Sharqi. This time they put the weapons in an old brick factory on the main road linking Amara and Baghdad." Then he pulled out what he said was a very recent report, only five days old. "The regime continues to hide information and computer equipment," he read. "It is distributing them among security and Baath Party officials to hide in their houses. A few days ago Ali Hassan al-Majid"—Chemical Ali, who was responsible for gassing the Kurds in 1988—"met with Baathist Party and security officials in Maysan province and told them how to evacuate their families to two places: the first a football field in Hay al-Moalimeen, in the city of Amara, and the second in the village of Bitaira. He"—Chemical Ali—"explained that this is so the regime can bomb the other places in the city in the event an uprising occurs, so that their families won't be killed."

The SCIRI official said it was because of such information, and because of past experience with Saddam Hussein, that he and his colleagues were so concerned about the consequences for Iraqi civilians in the event of a war.

The story of the Hakim family is one of the most tragic sagas in the bloody history of modern Iraq. Ayatollah Hakim has been waiting many years and has paid a very high price to bring about an Islamic revolution in his country. When I asked him to tell me about his early life, he shook his head, as if to say, "Where to begin?" When I insisted, he gave me an impressionistic version: "I was born in Iraq, went to a madrasah in Iraq, went to prison in Iraq, was tortured in Iraq. . . . I was married when I was eighteen; when the monarchy was toppled I was nineteen. I had grown up in a kind of poor family, but at the same time it was respected. I grew up during the Second World War, and I saw demonstrations in the streets over the establishment of Palestine"—he meant Israel. "I saw the arrival of Communist ideas. I was pulled by a rope through the streets when I was twenty years old. And . . . things have moved this way until now. All this period was characterized by killings, imprisonments, and I was tortured. I was burned with cigarettes, electroshocked. My head was put into a metal vise; I was beaten very harshly and imprisoned in a cell where I couldn't distinguish between night and day. All of this happened when I was in my youth. When I was an older man, five of my brothers and nine of my nephews were killed. Fifty of my relatives were killed or disappeared. I've had seven assassination attempts against me, but I depend on the Almighty to cleanse my soul, and I am not tired, I will continue."



Hakim's mother, one of his father's two wives, was Lebanese. Hakim was his father's protégé, and became an Islamic scholar and teacher. His father died in 1970, and the role of spiritual leader of the Iraqi Shiites fell to a disciple, Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr, who encouraged his followers to support Al Dawa, which was by then the most militant Iraqi Islamist group resisting Saddam's Baathists. Arrests, torture, and deportation of Shiites accelerated throughout the seventies. In 1977, the regime attacked a large religious demonstration in Najaf led by Hakim and one of his brothers, and a wholesale purge of the Iraqi Shia community ensued. Several clerics were arrested and executed, and several thousand Shias were imprisoned. During a nationwide witch hunt, Shia Muslims were forced to "prove" that they were Iraqis and not Iranians, or "Persians." Tens of thousands were expelled from the country. In April, 1980, an assassination attempt was made on Saddam's deputy Tariq Aziz. Saddam then arrested Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr and his sister, and it is believed that she was raped and murdered in front of Sadr. He was killed when nails were driven through his head. Hakim realized that he would be next, and he left Iraq in October of that year, shortly after the Iran-Iraq War started. He arrived in Tehran a couple of months later.

Ayatollah Hakim's family has homes in the city of Qom, which is in many ways similar to their home town of Najaf. Qom is the site of the grandiose shrine to Fatima, the sister of the Eighth Imam of the Shia faith. Najaf is the burial place of Ali, whom the Shia believe to have been betrayed, by the Sunnis, when a successor to Muhammad was chosen. Qom lies seventy-five miles southwest of Tehran, across a bleak landscape of dry hills and agricultural flatlands. The city is a low-level sprawl of boulevards lined with trees and arched yellow brick buildings, and there are many mosques. Bearded clerics wearing white or black turbans are more in evidence in Qom than in Tehran.

I met one of Ayatollah Hakim's nephews, Mahmoud, in the house of a Hakim son-in-law in Qom. We sat on cushions on the floor drinking tea, under a wall clock decorated with the silhouette of Ayatollah Khomeini. Mahmoud is a slender, bearded man of about forty, with glasses and an angular face. He worked a string of pale-green jade worry beads as we talked, and chain-smoked his way through a ten-pack of thin Iranian Bahman cigarettes. "After the revolution in Iran," Mahmoud said, "the tensions between the Iraqi regime and the Shias intensified. Saddam wanted to control the Shia religious schools in the holy cities, and the Shia clergy were very opposed to this. The tensions grew also because of my uncle's increased role in the Islamic opposition. When Iran managed to take control of the battlefield in the war, and the Iraqi Army began to retreat, the Iraqi regime tried to put pressure on Iran by holding an Islamic conference in Baghdad. Some of the Hakims were among the *ulama*"—clerics—"who were invited. The invitations were delivered by top members of the Baath regime. This was a first. These officials came and issued their invitations, but they made threats at the same time. In spite of this, the Hakims refused to attend, because they realized that the real reason for the conference was to give public support to Saddam. The Hakims were the only religious family who did not attend; all the other religious families went to the conference.

"Ten days later, the regime detained sixty-five members of the Hakim family. They ranged in age from fourteen to seventy-five and included all the sons, grandsons, and nephews of Imam Hakim. They were taken to the cells of the General Security Directorate in Baghdad, where they were tortured, hung by their arms for up to ten and twelve hours, beaten, and forced to stand naked among other groups of prisoners and guards; they were also electroshocked. Some were left with bad burn scars from these shocks. Sons were beaten in front of their fathers."

Mahmoud began to speak in the first person. "After about ten days of our detention and torture, the regime executed six people. They continued to put pressure on us, denying us food and water, trying to destroy us from the inside." One of his relatives was released and sent to Iran with a message for Ayatollah Hakim, saying that he should stop his traitorous activities. The man who delivered the message had been told that his three sons would be executed if he did not return to Iraq. "He didn't go back," Mahmoud said. "A year and a half later, ten more of us, including his three sons, were executed." Mahmoud was then twenty. "My father was also one of the group of ten men who were executed," he said. Mahmoud didn't learn about the executions until he and the others were transferred to Iraq's central prison, the notorious Abu Ghraib, outside Baghdad. "A prisoner who had an illegal radio heard the news on a broadcast from Iran about the executions of sixteen Hakims, and he came and told us."

He was not surprised, Mahmoud said. "We all expected to be executed at any hour." Mahmoud and his relatives were kept for the next six and a half years in two crowded cells at Abu Ghraib, where, Mahmoud said, they were not allowed to read or write, or go out, or have any contact with other prisoners. Two of his relatives in his cell died after being refused medical care, and most of them developed malnutrition, t.b., and skin lesions. "During the entire period, we had no news of our families," he said in a flat voice. "One of my relatives became paralyzed; he couldn't walk. Another's hair fell out. Another had kidney failure. And there were other things that I can't recall now."

In 1992, four years after the end of the Iran-Iraq War and a year after the Gulf War, most of the surviving Hakims were released. I asked Mahmoud if he and his relatives had ever been charged with any crimes or sentenced, even on trumped-up charges. He smiled. "No, of course not. We were never sentenced—we were just hostages, and we knew that." Mahmoud married and decided to go to Iran. Saddam's Mukhabarat had continued to make his life unbearable, harassing him and trying to get him to become an informant. He began to fear that he would be arrested again. He got permission to take his wife to Jordan, on medical grounds, and they went to London and then Iran.

"We feel sorrow for losing all of our beloved ones, and for spending our youth locked up in cells," Mahmoud said. "We were prevented from using our minds, and even our muscles. On the other hand, one learned how to make decisions, and to be self-reliant."

The Badr Brigade has several bases in the Iranian province of Khuzestan, which shares a border with Iraq on the west. The southern border of Khuzestan is on the coastline of the Persian Gulf. Sixty-five per cent of the population of the province are ethnic Arabs. Khuzestan was Iran's southern front during the Iran-Iraq War, and it bore the brunt of Saddam's initial military thrust into Iran. The port city of Khorramshahr, across the Shatt al-Arab waterway from the city of Basra, was occupied for eighteen months by the Iraqi Army, and after it was dislodged Iraq repeatedly shelled Khuzestan's cities with medium-range missiles. The provincial capital of Ahwaz functioned throughout the war as the Iranian Army's regional rear-guard supply base. Then, after the intifada failed, in 1991, tens of thousands of Iraqi refugees emigrated across the border. Many of them are still there today. Relief agencies estimate that up to a million new Iraqi refugees may flee to Iran if the United States launches a war against Saddam.

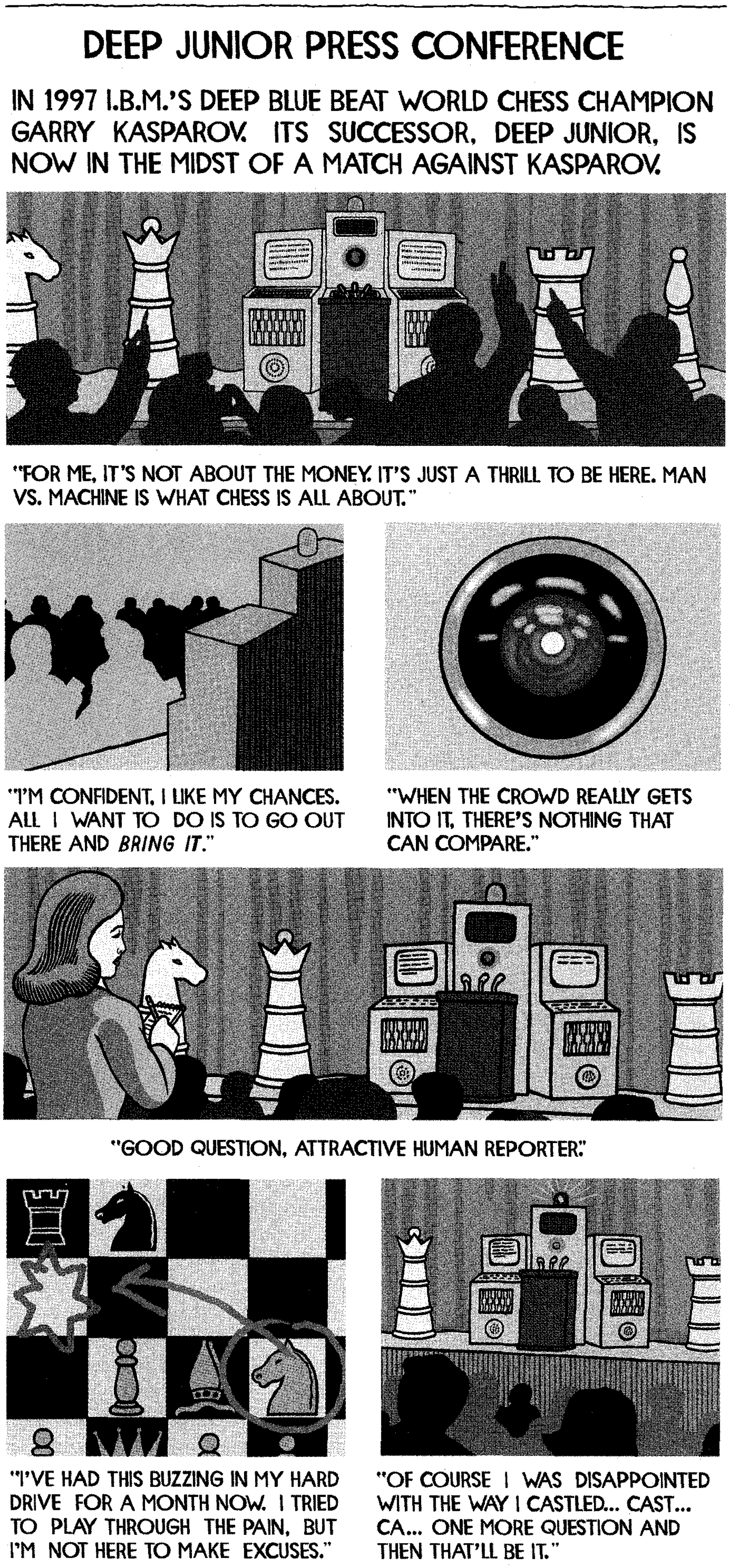
The Al Hawizeh marsh straddles the border. On the Iraqi side, Al Hawizeh is practically the only part of the ancient Mesopotamian marshlands that Saddam hasn't drained completely. Hakim's fighters are said to go back and forth across the border through Al Hawizeh, although I was told in Tehran that Badr militiamen had been under orders for some time to remain on their bases.

Few journalists have been allowed to travel to Khuzestan, and I was afraid that I wouldn't get in, especially since there had been violent disturbances in the area recently. Youths in Ahwaz had rioted when the police cracked down on shops selling contraband CDs and confiscated privately owned satellite dishes. But my permission slipped through somehow, and I got a flight to Ahwaz on a Russian-made Tupolev passenger jet operated by Iran Air. My travelling companion and translator, Mehrdad Mirdamadi, was a sociology lecturer from Tehran University who has translated Umberto Eco into Farsi and teaches a course in the Anthropology of Leisure. Mirdamadi is thirty-seven, and, like many Iranian men his age, is a veteran of the Iran-Iraq War, but he fought on the northern front. He did not talk much about his war experiences except to say that he had not had it all that bad. When his commanding officers discovered that he spoke English (as a boy, in the seventies, Mirdamadi spent five years at school in Oxford), he was encouraged to give classes to his fellow-officers and soldiers. "It turned out to be a very good time in my life," he said.

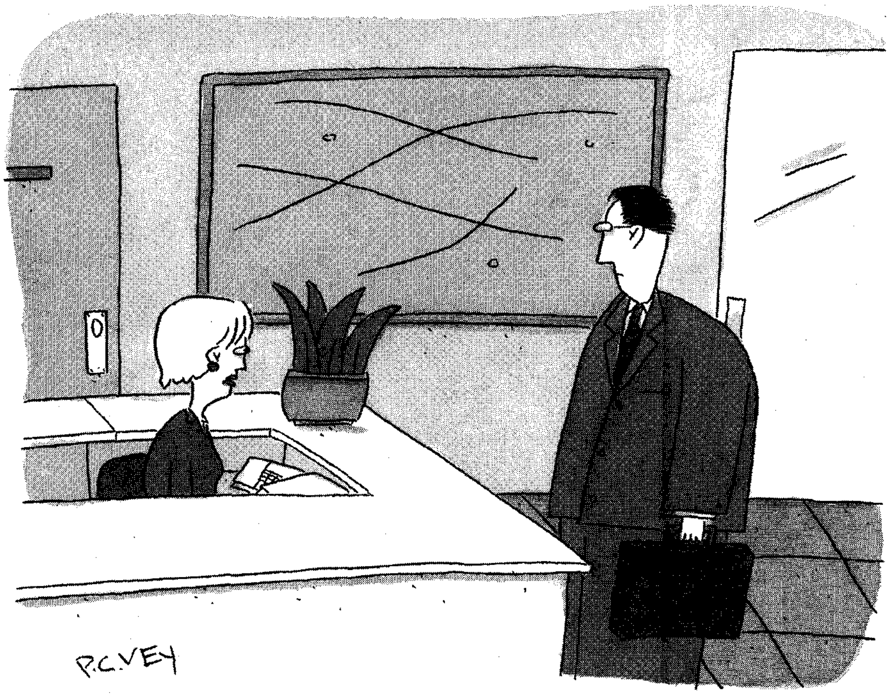
Almost a million people live in Ahwaz, which has a pleasant river, the Karun, running through it, and a sunny California-style climate. Our hotel, the Fajr Grand, overlooked the riverfront promenade. It had been a luxurious place in the early seventies, but, our driver said, it had been requisitioned as a military hospital during the Iran-Iraq War. There were only a few reminders of the war in Ahwaz: colorful murals commemorating martyrs, and, on a traffic roundabout, a bronze monument of a soldier standing on a globe of the world, wielding an Islamic banner. The Fajr was filled with Iranian businessmen, students of hotel administration who were there as part of their course work, and Dutch, British, and Italian men who appeared to be oil technicians of some sort.

Visiting the Badr military camps was forbidden by the Iranians, but I was permitted to go to some refugee camps, and the next morning Mehrdad Mirdamadi and I set off in a white Toyota Land Cruiser, accompanied by three Iranian officials. Two of them were civilian employees of the Ahwaz municipal office, the other was a brawny Interior Ministry agent who was pleasant enough but whose job seemed to be keeping an eye on me. We headed toward Ashrafi Esfahani, a camp near the old city of Dezful, about an hour and a half away, passing through a flat plain with a hodgepodge of military camps, orange groves, cabbage and wheat fields, and the occasional scrubby roadside settlement. Flames and smoke shot out from oil refineries in the distance.

Ashrafi Esfahani looked like a


DEEP JUNIOR PRESS CONFERENCE
IN 1997 I.B.M.'S DEEP BLUE BEAT WORLD CHESS CHAMPION GARRY KASPAROV. ITS SUCCESSOR, DEEP JUNIOR, IS NOW IN THE MIDST OF A MATCH AGAINST KASPAROV.
"FOR ME, IT'S NOT ABOUT THE MONEY. IT'S JUST A THRILL TO BE HERE. MAN VS. MACHINE IS WHAT CHESS IS ALL ABOUT."
"I'M CONFIDENT. I LIKE MY CHANCES. ALL I WANT TO DO IS TO GO OUT THERE AND *BRING IT*."
"WHEN THE CROWD REALLY GETS INTO IT, THERE'S NOTHING THAT CAN COMPARE."
"GOOD QUESTION, ATTRACTIVE HUMAN REPORTER."
"I'VE HAD THIS BUZZING IN MY HARD DRIVE FOR A MONTH NOW. I TRIED TO PLAY THROUGH THE PAIN, BUT I'M NOT HERE TO MAKE EXCUSES."
"OF COURSE I WAS DISAPPOINTED WITH THE WAY I CASTLED... CAST... CA... ONE MORE QUESTION AND THEN THAT'LL BE IT."

MICHAEL KUPPERMAN, BEN GREENMAN



"Isn't just knowing he's here for your appointment good enough—do you really need to see him?"

• •

showpiece Middle Eastern slum. A clean, paved street led to a tidy administration building and then past rows of cinder-block houses with flat roofs festooned with TV antennas and spiderwebs of electrical lines. There was a clinic, a primary school, a few shops owned by the residents, and water tanks stamped with the logo of the sponsor, the AMAR International Charitable Foundation, set up in 1991 by Baroness Emma Nicholson, who was then a member of the British parliament and is now in the European Parliament. AMAR provides support for those who survived Saddam's genocidal attacks on the marsh dwellers after the war in Kuwait and the Shia intifada.

A tall, graying man whom we met in the street agreed to talk, and he led us into a rank alleyway that doubled as a sewer. The stench was still bad inside his house. After shooing his wife out of sight, he ushered us into a space that served as a living room and the family's sleeping quarters. He lit a stick of incense to mask the odor. There was no furniture: only pictures of Khomeini and Khamenei; a clock; an old TV; a fan; a radio; and a doll and teddy bear, arranged together, as if on an altar, at one end of the room. The man, whom I will call Aziz, was forty-five years old and had five children. Since coming to Iran in 1993, he had survived by working as a seasonal agricultural laborer. Before, he had been a cheesemaker and had owned a dairy shop in his home village in Basra province. His troubles had begun shortly after the 1991 intifada, when one of his brothers, who had worked as a repairman for the Army, fled to Iran. "They accused him of being involved in the intifada, so he fled," Aziz said. Aziz had returned home one day to find his door sealed and a sign on it saying "No entry." The police told him that he couldn't move back in until his brother returned. He and his immediate family moved to another village, but he soon learned that the security forces were hunting for him, and that they had taken other family members hostage. "It was then that I realized I had to flee to Iran," he said.

Aziz said that his father had died in prison, and that five of his cousins had been executed for "spying for Iran." They weren't activists. "We were ordinary people," he said, "but the police were just looking for reasons to accuse more and more Shias. One day, for example, a picture of Saddam was blown down by the wind, and for that six people were arrested."

I asked him if he hoped to return home soon. "No," he replied, shaking his head emphatically. "I'm not so concerned about Saddam Hussein. It's what comes after him. If it's a democracy, then yes, but if it's a dictatorship I can't see there will be much of a difference. I remember feeling constantly threatened in Iraq. Every day, I was stopped by security men who asked me if I was a member of Al Dawa. Here I can go where I want."

Aziz had touched on a delicate problem. The camp's young Iranian administrator had informed me that the birthrate of the women there was extremely high, because none of them practiced birth control. He joked a little sourly that, if they kept it up, the area would soon be overwhelmed by Iraqis. Most of them arrived after the 1991 intifada, and now they did not want to leave. Their children had been born in Iran and regarded themselves as Iranians. "The camps are a real problem for us," he said. "We want these people to return to their own country. They are rather primitive, and they don't assimilate well here in Iran."

Iranian and Arab Shia Muslims have a very distinct sense of identity, which contradicts the long-standing American assumption that Iraqi Shias would probably ally themselves with Iran in a post-Saddam scenario. This perception was heavily exploited by Saddam during his campaign to drum up international support for the war against Iran, and is said to be one of the reasons for Bush senior's decision not to support the Shia insurgents during the 1991 intifada.

In Tehran, I had spoken with Davoud Hermidas Bavand, a political analyst who worked in the Iranian Mission to the U.N. under the Shah, and who now teaches political science and international law. "The Iraqi Shias' dedication and devotion to Arabism is much stronger than to Shiism," he said. "If a Shia were to take power in Iraq, there would be a honeymoon with Iran, but this would soon end." He mentioned, as an analogy, the violent rift between Cambodia and Vietnam that emerged soon after the American withdrawal from Southeast Asia. "They were both socialist states, but they had a lot of old history. It's the same here. Arab culture is defined in Iraq by its separateness. As civilizations, Iran and Iraq do have a common history, but psychologically we are apart. Even the rest of the Arabs do not accept Iran as part of the family."

Many times, I heard Iranians described, by Iraqi Shias, in terms that carried a mixture of deep mistrust and some envy. Invariably, the comments were made with a revolving hand gesture indicating slipperiness, a well-known Persian trait, according to the Arabs. An Iraqi exile in London told me, with a knowing smile, "You know how the Persians are"—hand gesture. "They can be the nicest people to your face, but underneath they might want to kill you. On the other hand, the Arabs, as you know, are straightforward. They say what they mean."

SCIRI's representative in Ahwaz, Salah Mousavi, is a thin, rather nervous man who wears three-piece suits that are a little too large for him. His angular features and square, shovel-like beard give him the appearance of a Mennonite farmer. When I told him that I wanted to meet with members of the Badr Brigade, he explained in a low voice that, because he and his comrades were refugees in Iran, there were certain limitations on what they could do. He could not take me to Al Hawizeh, for instance—the Iranians would not allow that—but since I had permission from the Iranian Interior Ministry to visit Ahwaz, perhaps he could bring some people from Al Hawizeh to see me.

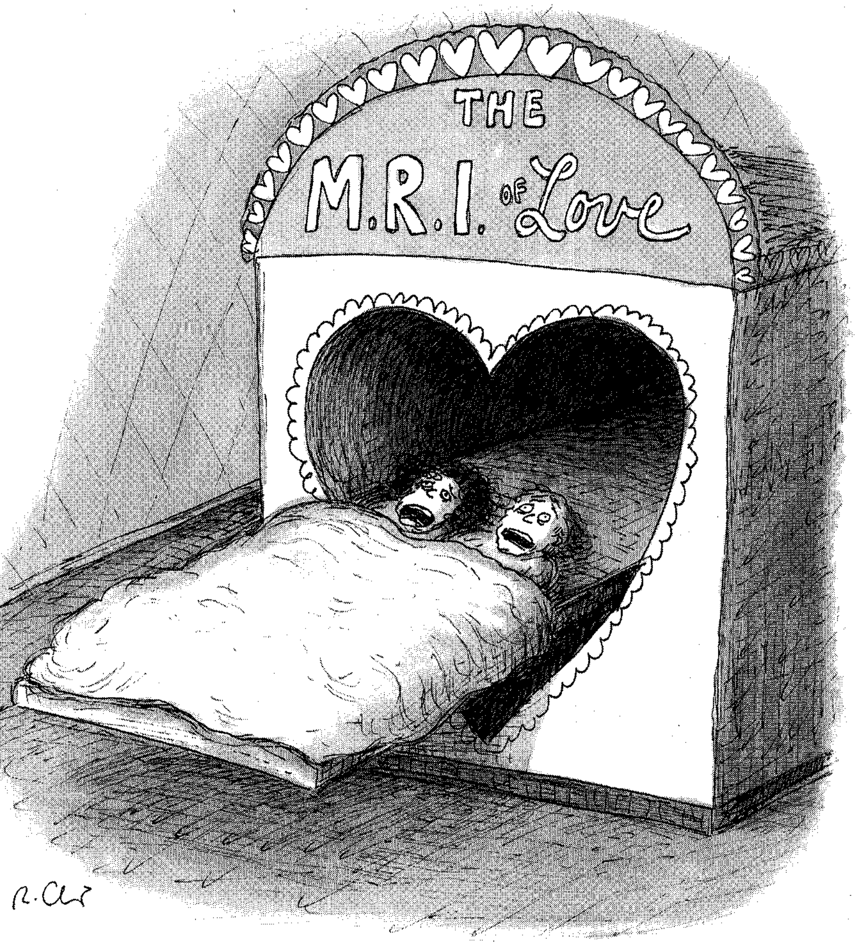
The next afternoon, Salah Mousavi returned with three men. He motioned two of them to sit apart from us. He and the third man, a huge Iraqi who wore a black headdress and a brown robe, sat with us in a quiet corner of the hotel lounge, with a view of the river outside the window. The large man was Jassim Mousavi, a prominent member of a marsh Arab tribe. Jassim is tall, well over six feet, and hulking, with a large nose and face, and massive hands. His feet, which were clad in sandals, are also immense.

Jassim explained that his tribe consisted of some two thousand families who had always lived in the marshes of Maysan province, surviving as fishermen and keepers of water buffalo. They had enjoyed a certain independence, as he put it, from the central government of Iraq, until the early nineteen-nineties, after the failed intifada, when the Iraqi Army burned their homes and killed their livestock. Jassim's voice rose in anger when he told me this, and Salah hushed him, cocking his head to another table in the lounge, where a young man was sitting alone, obviously listening to us.

"The Baathists wanted to drain the area so they could find the soldiers hiding there," Jassim said, in a lower tone. Saddam set fire to the marshes and drained them, and Jassim and his entire family, including his mother, his wife, and his children, were taken to prison. "This was in the eighth month of 1993," he said. "We were accused of being anti-Baathists and moved to an Army base." Two of Jassim's nephews were executed there, and he and his other relatives were tortured.

"They wanted us to give names of the people of our tribe who were against the regime," he said. He showed me a deep cleft in his right palm, and then he pointed to his groin, and grimaced. "They burned us on the private parts," he said, "with electricity and also here"—he drew up one of his big bare feet to show me the scarred sole. "We were hung from the ceiling fan upside down. When I was like that, they brought my mother to the interrogation room and they said, 'If you do not tell us we will shoot her.' She vomited and fainted. Then they took her away, and I don't know what happened to her." He changed the subject. "They killed thirty-one of my buffalo." He breathed heavily, theatrically, to show how much this had affected him. "This was my wealth, my main source of income. . . . We weren't involved in politics, we were just living our lives."

Jassim was finally released, but two of his uncles were still in prison. "They will release them if I return and hand myself in," he said. The SCIRI man, Salah, had been making warning signals to us



with his eyes while Jassim spoke. The young man sitting alone at the table had been glancing in our direction. Salah leaned over and explained that, just a few weeks ago, one of their comrades, Abu Zahran Naseri, had been assassinated in Ahwaz. He claimed that Naseri had been involved in the assassination attempt against Saddam Hussein's eldest son, Uday, in 1996. Al Dawa took credit for the attack at the time, but so did a few other organizations. "Are you telling me that it was a SCIRI hit?" I asked. Salah smiled. "God knows," he replied, looking pleased. (The relationship between the two groups is difficult to sort out, and Saddam uses the rubric "Al Dawa" to refer to pretty much all Shias who oppose him.)

Jassim was worried about an American invasion of Iraq. "We are looking forward to the U.S. attack, but there is danger for us. They have brought rocket platforms near to where we are living and could bomb us." Salah concurred. "There are also a lot of rumors that Saddam has brought missiles to where the people, the tribes, are living in the south," he said. "They are doing this in a very public way. It's these rockets and the bombs that are the problem. The ordinary soldiers have said that they will desert before they act against their own people. Some of the tank crews have brought civilian clothing with them so that they can escape when the fighting starts. But the regime has stationed firing squads in front of and behind the Army units with orders to shoot anyone trying to escape. . . . You have to understand that there is no such thing as a red line Saddam won't cross."

Jassim left our table, and a short, stocky, middle-aged man with a tough face came over and sat down. He wore a white kaffiyeh that was held in place by a black band, and a gray dish-dash robe with embroidered edges. He introduced himself as Abu Ahmed al-Majidi, and explained that he was the son of a chief of the Majidi clan, a subgroup of the sizable Amara tribe of southern Iraq. In the past, he said, his clan of some three thousand people had lived at the edge of the marshlands and, like Jassim's people, had made their living from cattle farming and fishing. Their lives had changed completely during the Iran-Iraq War, when Saddam demanded that the tribe's able-bodied men and boys become soldiers. His people had consistently refused, and then, one day in 1985, the regime sent in troops.

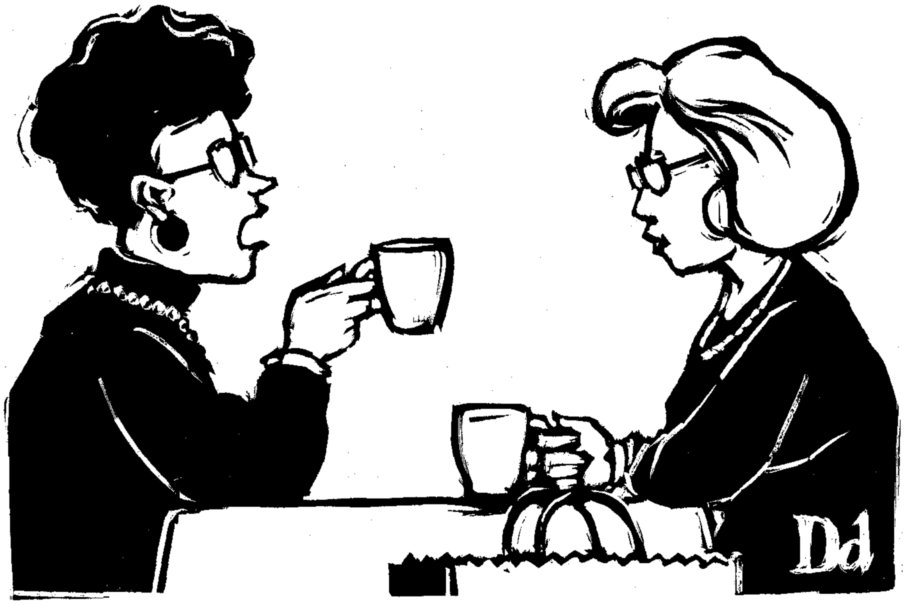
"Six hundred were executed in one day," Abu Ahmed said in a tight voice. "This was done in front of their families, by the Fourth Army Corps. They shot the men and those who had escaped military service, and also their brothers and fathers." Abu Ahmed and his sons were away from the village that day, but three of his cousins and many of his friends were among those shot to death. Afterward, he told me, the relatives of the murdered men attacked the regime. "We went into the cities at night and killed Baathist officials." Eventually, the regime launched a full-scale military offensive against the region, using tanks, artillery, and aircraft, which bombed the inhabitants with napalm.

Abu Ahmed interrupted his account every so often to name some of the dead—friends and relatives who had been killed. It seemed important to him that I note down their names, which I did. "I can name many, many other people for you as well—they were as close to me as my own children," he said.

The revolt of the marsh Arabs continued throughout the eighties, punctuated by attacks from the regime's military forces. Then, in 1991, the intifada broke out. "All the tribes took part," he said. "We went to the cities and attacked government buildings, and then the government counterattacked. We retreated to our home areas, but every so often there were more attacks and counterattacks. This continued until the draining of the marshes was completed. By 1993, none of my people were remaining in the area; they had emigrated to Iran or to other cities in Iraq, like Kerbala."

I asked Abu Ahmed what the tribes of the south would do if the U.S. launched a war. Would they rise up again? "We are not afraid," he said. "If there is an attack, we will take part." I asked him if he was still involved in the armed resistance—an allusion to the Badr Brigade—but Salah, who was translating from Arabic to Farsi, told my translator that he wouldn't pass that question on. He cocked his head, indicating the man at the nearby table, who had not budged.

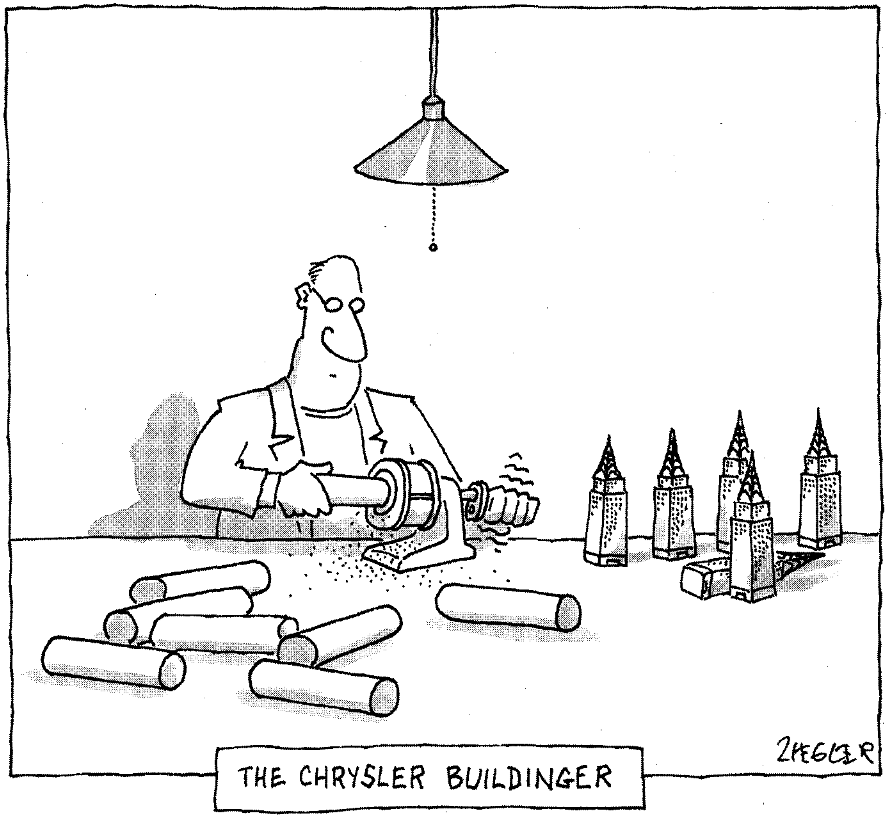
In 1993, Abu Ahmed said, after the marshes were drained, he came to Iran to carry on the war effort, and he continued to go back and forth across the border. Four and a half years ago, he was caught and imprisoned. Abu Ahmed showed me one of his index fingers, badly scarred around the fingernail, which he said had been yanked off with a pair of pliers. He had been given a life sentence



"It's taken me a while, but I can finally see the value in having tons of money."

in Abu Ghraib prison and was one of the last prisoners released in the general amnesty that Saddam declared last October, following his victory in the Presidential referendum.

Abu Ahmed didn't explain how he had come to Iran, or what he was doing now, but it seemed fairly apparent to me that he was a member of Ayatollah Hakim's militia. What did he wish for the future of Iraq? I asked. "We want three things only: freedom, security, and peace," he replied. And what did he wish for Saddam Hussein? Abu Ahmed sat back in his chair and sighed. "What can I wish for a man from whom I have seen nothing except blood and torture and more blood? One death is too good for him. I wish him death whenever the sun rises, and whenever it sets, over and over again."



THE CHRYSLER BUILDINGER

At the end of January, at Ayatollah Hakim's invitation, a delegation of Iraqi opposition leaders came to Tehran to prepare for a meeting in northern Iraq. Ahmad Chalabi, of the Iraqi National Congress, who is the opposition figure closest to Washington, was there, as was a representative of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan and several other, less high-profile Iraqis. More than a dozen delegates were in Tehran for days, moving around in convoys in the smog from one "secret" meeting to another. They announced that in mid-February the Iranians were going to escort them into Kurdish-held territory, where they would continue to plan a provisional government. There were still several things to hash out. "Chalabi is trying to push the announcement of a government-in-exile, a project he has been promoting for some time," an aide to Hakim told me. "Hakim is opposed to this. SCIRI and the other groups want to hold off until Saddam has been toppled, and the people can choose for themselves. But Chalabi seems to want to secure a leadership position now because he lacks a base of support inside Iraq, and because he is not popular and has no army of his own."

The aide said that Hakim had given up his ambitions of installing an Islamic revolutionary state in Iraq. "One of the realities that we must recognize is that we have to compromise," he said. "The Kurds have given up their ambitions for an independent Kurdish state, because of the opposition of Turkey, especially, and Iran. For us, the compromise is that we'll be part of a coalition government." As for Hakim's personal plans, the aide said he thought that he would return to Iraq as a religious, not a political, leader.

Ibrahim Yazdi, a prominent Iranian reformist politician who was once Ayatollah Khomeini's foreign minister, thought the planning was a little presumptive. "You shouldn't make the mistake of assuming that the majority of Iraqis necessarily want either Chalabi or Hakim as their leader," he said. "Nobody knows what the Iraqis inside the country really want."

The Iranians were unofficially cooperating with the preparations for war and regime change. They had tolerated Hakim's dialogue with the Bush Administration, and had even allowed Chalabi to set up an office in Tehran, paid for by the U.S. government. Hakim's aide said he thought that negotiations would take place soon between Washington and Tehran. "The United States seems to think that if the Shias are given a role in Iraq this will keep the Iranians out, but I don't think the Iranians will be satisfied with that. There is a lot they can ask for: their frozen funds in overseas banks, the lifting of sanctions, and many other things."

Later, in London, I met Hamid al-Bayati, Ayatollah Hakim's representative, in a small office he occupies in a shabby section of West Kensington. "In Washington last August, the United States accepted the idea of local opposition groups playing a role in the transition and afterward," Bayati said. "What kind of role depends on how the Americans intend to carry out their war. Will it be an Afghan-style war, with the opposition groups acting as the Northern Alliance did? Or an American invasion assisted by some Iraqis, like the ones being trained in Hungary?"

Everyone seemed to assume that there would be a change of regime, although exactly how this was going to happen was less than clear, and no one was more aware of the horrors of a fight with Saddam Hussein than the Shias. If and when it was over, Bayati said, "we will not accept a role as an auxiliary to a foreign force. That is out of the question politically." The Shias have too much history. ♦

PERSONAL HISTORY

DANCING IN THE CITY

A time when only one thing mattered.

BY ALMA GUILLERMOPRIETO

One autumn day in 1969, before the start of the advanced class at the Merce Cunningham dance studio, Merce came over to me and said that there were two opportunities in South America for teaching modern dance which he thought might interest me. One was with a group of dancers who were just forming their own company, and the other was a government-funded school dedicated to modern dance.

My life in dance had been routine and predictable until then, if not exactly normal. In Mexico, my native country, I joined a modern-dance company at the age of twelve; when, at sixteen, I travelled to New York to live with my mother, I kept on dancing. At first, I took classes at the Martha Graham studio. In the world of modern dance, the brilliant, temperamental Martha was the most revered choreographer. Starting in the nineteen-thirties, she had revolutionized not only dance but theatre; her use of sets and costumes turned on its head every standard notion of what can be done and communicated on a stage. Her quest for a body language that reflected the deepest inner conflicts, and the way she used gestures and movements to stage great myths, centering them on the internal universe of a single woman—Medea, Joan of Arc, Eve, all of them ultimately Martha herself, in any case—brought her admirers and disciples from all the arts. She was, moreover, the first creator of modern dance to devise a truly universal dance technique out of the movements she developed in her choreography. I had studied Graham technique in Mexico, and one of my reasons for moving to New York had been to train directly at the source, at Martha's studio on East Sixty-third Street.

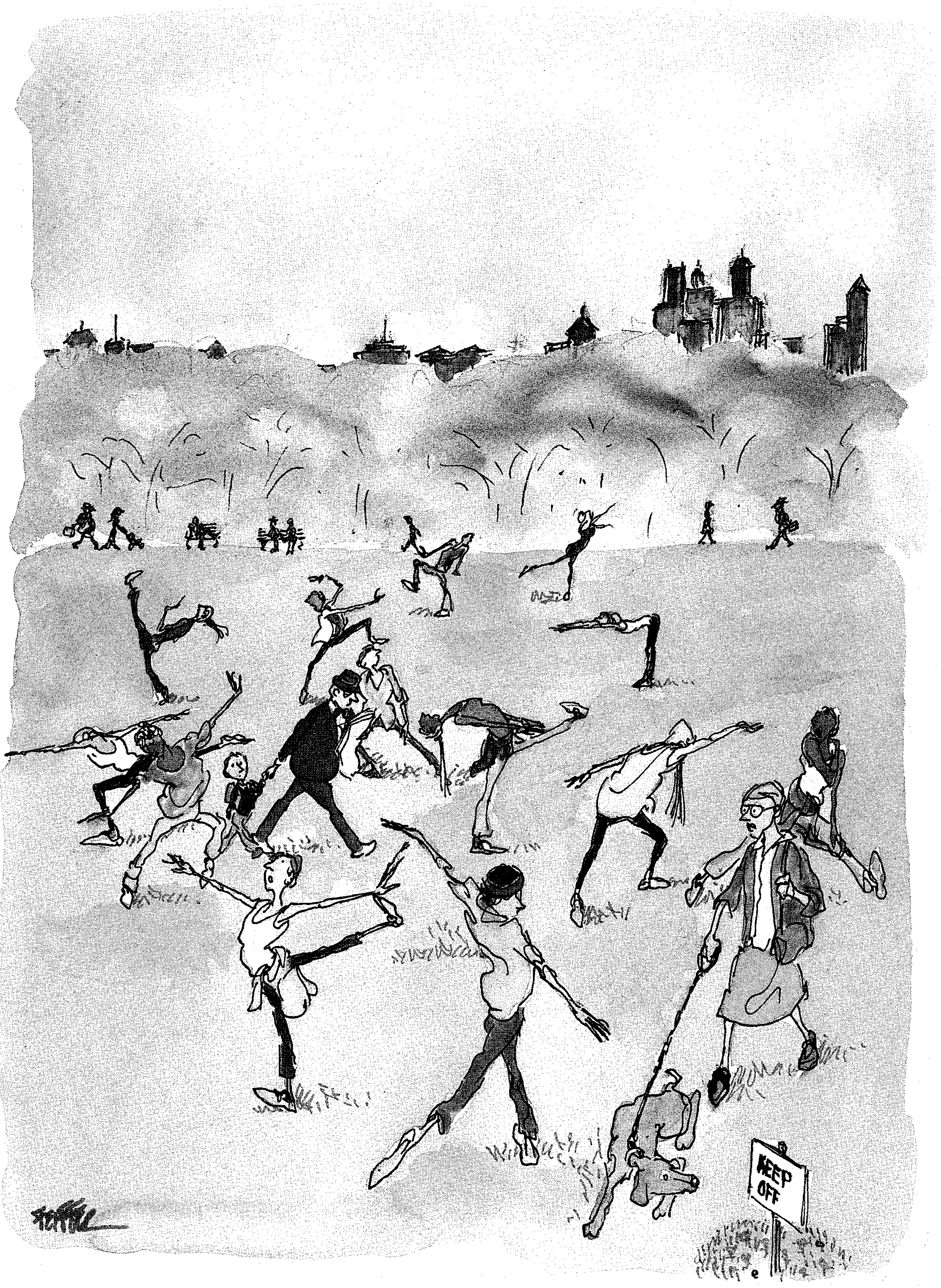
By that point, the mid-nineteen-sixties, Martha was very old and more or less pickled in alcohol. She put in rare appearances at her studio, interrupting even a class that one of her best dancers was teaching to hurl philosophical exhortations and wounding comments at us, mocking our lack of passion and our flabby muscles. One of my most terrifying memories is of a mute hiatus during a class when all of us stood frozen in some pose Martha had demanded, while she moved through the room, pinching this dancer in a rage, giving that one a tongue-lashing. Pain was necessary for dance, she always said, and I think that at that stage in her life she wanted to contribute to our training by guaranteeing that we would suffer. After a couple of years of this, I felt the need for a less orthodox and oppressive atmosphere, and switched to the Cunningham studio, partly because I admired Merce's work with all my heart, and partly because, after Martha's, his studio was the best known.

Elegant, alert, and unfailingly courteous, Merce Cunningham was an established artist at the forefront of the Manhattan avant-garde. Modern dance has always been an art of the few, and there are not many choreographers who, like Merce, can afford the luxury of a standing company. Fewer still have a studio where they and their company can earn money and create a pool of future dancers by offering daily classes. Even so, the studio and the classes barely enabled Merce and his company members to get by. His audience was devoted but small, and during performances one sometimes heard boos and hisses from baffled spectators who hadn't imagined, when they bought their tickets, that the dancers would not go on point, and that the accompaniment would be not tuneful music but a series of sounds generally produced at random, either on traditional instruments like John Cage's delightful "prepared piano" or, more often, by means of electronic gadgets. That was the case in "Winterbranch," a rather long dance with no stage lights that was performed to a very loud metallic screech—hard even for the dancers to take.

Friend, collaborator, and source of inspiration to artists like Jasper Johns and Robert Rauschenberg, lifelong companion and creative partner of the composer John Cage, Merce, always an innovator, always evolving, was respected even by his detractors for the clean harmony of his work, for the simple, lucid logic of the technique taught at his studio, and for the modest, unassuming way in which he had taken his leave one day of Martha's company, where he had been a principal dancer. Without any rhetorical fuss, he also left behind the obsession with passion and narrative that was characteristic of Martha and her disciples; the use of dramaturgy as the connecting thread of choreography; and the rhythmic music that guided the dancers' movements the way a tambourine leads a trained bear in a circus. Instead, he chose to pursue the meandering paths of abstraction, chance, and Zen philosophy. Yet his avant-garde experiments never interfered with the technical perfection and extraordinary refinement of his choreography. In his own way, he was a classicist.

Those of us who left Martha's studio for Merce's were attracted by that Apollonian temperament, which demanded concentration and intensity but rejected drama. It was mainly women who came to his little studio, on Third Avenue at Thirty-third Street, to take beginning, intermediate, and advanced classes, and quite a few of us were in flight from Martha. Merce's courteous distance came as cool salve on a burn, though it, too, had its price. Merce sometimes taught a beginners' class that started at 6 P.M. He didn't say much but would correct the students very patiently, and

JULES FEIFFER



For me, those bright mornings when we rehearsed in Central Park were the first irrefutable proof that being alive was worth it.

several of the more advanced dancers, including some who were already members of the company, would take the six-o'clock class in the hope that Merce would at least cast a glance at them. All of us saw him as a flame flickering in a dark chapel. We spoke his name as if it were written entirely in capital letters and laid siege to him with our eyes, and in return he almost never said a word to us.

JACK

How pleasant the yellow butter
melting on white kernels, the meniscus
of red wine that coats the insides of our goblets

where we sit with sturdy friends as old as we are
after shucking the garden's last Silver Queen
and setting husks and stalks aside for the horses

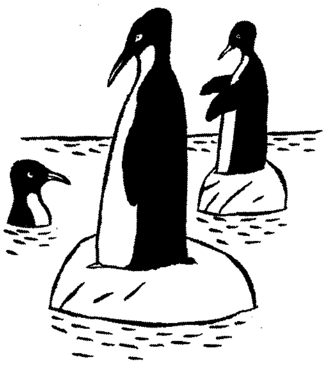
the last two of our lives, still noble to look upon:
our first foal, now a bossy mare of 28
which calibrates to 84 in people years

and my chestnut gelding, not exactly a youngster
at 22. Every year, the end of summer
lazy and golden, invites grief and regret:

suddenly it's 1980, winter buffets us,
winds strike like cruelty out of Dickens. Somehow
we have seven horses for six stalls. One of them,

The fleeting heyday of American dance was just beginning, and most of us who were to be found in the modern-dance studios then, with who knows what tangle of secret dreams inside us, had to work as secretaries or waitresses (I was the latter) in order to pay for classes and our own Spartan expenses. This meant that we came to class already tired. Merce's studio was a bare cave that stank of sweat and often lacked heat on the coldest winter days. Our motley layers of leg warmers and sweatpants couldn't protect us from the cold. The cement floor was covered with shabby black linoleum, and before class we would wrap tape around our feet in an effort to close up the alarming cracks that appeared on our bare soles as we spun across that adhesive surface. After class, we rinsed off the sweat as best we could at the sink in the studio's tiny bathroom and went home on the subway, sprawled in the seats to give our rebellious muscles some relief. All of this took its toll on our bodies, but we had no money for massages or therapies. As it was, David Vaughan, the brisk but softhearted Englishman who took our money at the front desk—and who is to this day the company's resident historian—more often than not gave us a stern look and a class ticket on credit. We went on ridiculous diets: a friend asked me privately one afternoon, with a blush, whether I thought constipation could have a significant effect on your weight; she'd been feeding on lettuce and broccoli for a week, had been constipated for five days, and had weighed herself on five scales but hadn't lost a pound on any of them. Generally, by about age thirty-five, dancers no longer have healthy feet or knees or much elasticity left in their tendons, ligaments, and joints. We were eighteen, twenty, twenty-five years old and we were the oldest young people in the world: our time was already running out.

Men were so scarce in this world that choreographers fought over them even if their feet were as flat as pancakes and their shoulders looked as if they'd been left dangling from a hook at birth. They strolled into class with a self-sufficient air, while we women were fervent and eternal supplicants, forever hoping against hope, suicidal gamblers who, despite the mirror's daily confirmation that our insteps were too low, our hips too wide, our legs too short, our arms too long, and our backs too stiff, would nevertheless go off to class in search of the miracle that would fulfill all our desires. *Look at me, say I'm beautiful, say I'm for you. Choose me. Let me dance in your company.*



When Merce didn't teach the beginners' class himself, he was replaced by one of the younger members of his company. The intermediate class was passed around among more established members of the company, and when they were on tour it was taught by other dancers, most of whom had performed with Merce at some point. Though at that time the intermediate class seemed to hold little interest for him, and he rarely taught it, on the way up to his small apartment over the dance studio he used to pause in the doorway for a few moments, one shoulder resting lightly against the frame, his long arms folded neatly against his torso, his long legs together, and his curly head—heavy and canine—tilted attentively to one side, watching us. I would watch him, too, out of the corner of my eye, and I liked to think that he was sending me some correction with his gaze, which I caught in mid-flight and obeyed. I liked even more to think that he was aware of this.

It was after one of those classes that he approached me for the first time. Merce, then fifty years old, employed certain well-worn theatrical tricks that nevertheless worked their full effect on

a big-nosed roan gelding, calm as a President's portrait,
lives in the rectangle that leads to the stalls. We call it
the motel lobby. Wise old campaigner, he dunks his

hay in the water bucket to soften it, then visits the others
who hang their heads over their dutch doors. Sometimes
he sprawls out flat to nap in his commodious quarters.

That spring, in the bustle of grooming
and riding and shoeing, I remember I let him go
to a neighbor I thought was a friend, and the following

fall she sold him down the river. I meant to
but never went looking for him, to buy him back,
and now my old guilt is flooding this twilit table.

My guilt is ghosting the candles that pale us to skeletons,
the ones we must all become in an as yet unspecified order.
Oh Jack, tethered in what rough stall alone

did you remember that one good winter?

—*Maxine Kumin*

us. One consisted in deploying his immense courtesy to convey the impression that you were doing him a favor by listening to him; another was to speak so softly that his audience was forced to concentrate completely on his words. That afternoon, he leaned toward me to murmur that, if I agreed and it was convenient, I might want to start taking the advanced class (which he almost invariably taught himself). That encounter, which can't have lasted more than thirty seconds, was one of the heart-stopping moments of my life.

It would never have occurred to me that there might be anything better in life than dance. I suffered because it was my destiny to suffer: I was plagued, among other things, by crippling shyness, by a sense that I was superfluous in the world, by a feeling that my face and body were unacceptable, by insomnia, loneliness, and severe anxiety attacks that often kept me even from going to class. However, I had no complaints at all about my life, which, seen from this distance, truly was marvellous.

My comrades in enchantment and I stood in line for three whole nights, one after the other, to buy cheap tickets in the standing-room section of the Metropolitan Opera House. (There was always someone who brought coffee and cookies for everyone in the line, and the spirit of solidarity was absolute.) For three nights running, we watched Rudolf Nureyev and Margot Fonteyn perform Kenneth MacMillan's "Romeo and Juliet." We watched all three performances standing up, but at close range, in the orchestra section, and the memory of Nureyev falling to his knees in ecstasy and covering Fonteyn's skirt with kisses still takes my breath away. The Martha Graham company was at the height of its glory. In 1965, during a three-week season at the Mark Hellinger Theatre, we took in the entire repertory of that monstrous genius (again, standing behind the last row in the orchestra section). During those weeks, our state of exaltation was so great that we managed only with difficulty to eat or speak.

My romance with Merce began the following year. Several of us went to a performance in a small auditorium at Hunter College, and the sight of such pure, limpid dance, so free of sentimental baggage that it seemed to be performed by a flock of subtle, iridescent birds, convinced me immediately that I was in the presence of a true revolutionary. It wasn't long before I left Martha's studio.

New York City offered us much more than dance. We watched Japanese and Italian movies at the Thalia and alternative films at midnight at the Waverly or the Bleecker Street Cinema. We learned that if we arrived at the New York State Theatre after the first intermission the ushers would let us in to watch the rest of New York City Ballet's program free, and thus we became familiar with a good part of George Balanchine's repertory. At the Apollo Theatre, we saw Wilson Pickett and James Brown; at the Fillmore East, Jefferson Airplane and Janis Joplin. We had a friend who worked as an usher and helped us sneak into Carnegie Hall, and we put together expert picnics in Central Park while waiting in line for tickets to the free performances there.

One day, we heard that the revolution was in Brooklyn, and we went to the Academy of Music—again, we stood in line all afternoon waiting for half-price tickets—to see the legendary Living Theatre, back in New York after a long exile in Europe. The actors took their clothes off and crawled naked all over the audience, which struck us as thrilling in the extreme. It was the period when the traditional divisions were beginning to blur between classical and modern dance, dance and the martial arts, dance and theatre, improvisation and performance. Joe Chaikin and Jean-Claude Van Itallie, Robert Wilson and the actors at the Performing Garage were inventing revolutionary theatrical forms, and we were inventing a new form of dance.

I say "we" because though I was neither a choreographer nor a famous, outstanding, or even promising dancer, I, too, was part of this avant-garde, dancing here and there with choreographers who were getting their start. There was Margaret Jenkins, for example, a dancer who taught Merce's intermediate class when the company was on tour, and who was beginning to create her own choreography: she'd book a performance at a theatre in Queens or in a Staten Island gym and then ask several of us who took her class to rehearse at her studio on Mulberry Street. I believe that she paid us five dollars a week for the rehearsals and thirty dollars for the performance. But I would have paid for the

"So! How is everybody today?"

• •

chance to perform, especially when it came to the experiments concocted by Elaine Shipman, one of my best friends, who was clearly destined for the opposite of stardom.

Elaine earned her living as an artist's model and was so beautiful that just looking at her filled me with delight. She had elegantly sculpted cheekbones, skin the color of black coffee. She also had the flattest, most inflexible feet I've ever seen, and a little belly—as if she were three months pregnant—that never went away. Long before it became fashionable, she refused to straighten her hair, and wore it in an Afro cut close to the skull; artifice simply wasn't her style. Every other dancer in the world, including me, learned to dance by imitation: when we saw our first dance teacher walking with toes pointed like newly sharpened pencils, with legs stretched stiff and heels turned out, we understood immediately that this was a superior mode of locomotion and sought to do likewise. Elaine's temperament resisted this kind of subjugation, to the point that she had to struggle to learn the movement sequences in any choreography but her own. Year after year, she has remained incapable of self-betrayal or attempting anything that looks the least bit fake. Her childhood dance teachers were descended from Isadora Duncan's school of movement, and she retains that Arcadian, lyrical, spontaneous, and organic vision of dance. We took the same classes and stood in line together to see Martha's company perform, and she was the person I most enjoyed playing at being soigné with. We would array ourselves to what we thought was devastatingly elegant effect in velvets and plumes acquired in Lower East Side flea markets, then perch at the bar of the Russian Tea Room and order one Silk Stockings each, which we consumed in ladylike sips, both to keep from getting drunk and to stretch out the evening. We carried precisely enough cash for the drink, the tip, and the subway fare home.

Shy and defenseless as she was, Elaine managed to find a sponsor in Baltimore and another one in Newport for her "events" (the word "happening" was vulgar). Our "company"—there were four or eight of us, depending on the day of the week—performed in an avant-garde gallery in the depths of a gloomy post-industrial area that was not yet SoHo. We also danced on the rusty rails of an old railroad yard in Baltimore, before an audience of perhaps twenty people. With Elaine's best friend Harry Sheppard, who remained her artistic partner until he died of AIDS, we made a movie. I can't remember much about my role, except that Elaine dressed me in a very beautiful full-length white dressing gown and I had to appear and disappear from among the branches of a tree. To this day, Elaine's work very much resembles her, it seems to me; it remains so natural that one can't help being charmed, and is filled with startling moments of evocative power.

One evening in Merce's dressing room, another of my friends, Graciela Figueroa, mentioned that she had started rehearsing with an odd woman who had a funny name—Twyla Tharp—and was seriously considering reaching the conclusion that the woman was a genius. That was how Graciela talked; she was the only friend I had who read Kierkegaard and Theodor Adorno, and for years, against all logic, I was convinced that Julio Cortázar had based the character of La Maga in his novel "Hopscotch" on her. She was from Uruguay, penniless, and eternally harried by visa problems; though Merce's studio was accredited by the Immigration and Naturalization Service to authorize temporary student visas, these could be renewed only three or four times. And there wasn't a dancer in the world—except for defectors from the Kirov or the Bolshoi—who could get a green card. I had a resident visa and no problems with the government, thanks to my mother, who was Guatemalan by birth but had taken U.S. citizenship long ago.

Graciela's accent, when she spoke English, was like Elaine's feet, absolutely resistant to civilization. *Chessss*, she would say, meaning "yes," and the word "unbelievable," which she often used, came out of her mouth in about seventeen syllables. She also shared Elaine's unruly quality—a kind of gorgeous awkwardness in the way she moved—but in her case it was joined with great strength, astonishing speed, and enormous daring. It's possible that no other woman has ever leaped as high on a stage as she did.

Yes, said Graciela, this Twyla woman was on the strange side, something new. A bit of a drill sergeant, but her work was very interesting: she didn't use music or even electronic accompaniment, like Merce, but total silence. At rehearsals, the dancers used tennis shoes rather than ballet slippers or bare feet, and struggled with movements that seemed improvised and *completely casual*—Graciela drove home the consonants of "completely" with a hammer and stretched "casual" into four syllables—but in fact were diabolically hard. Twyla had suggested to Graciela—and here Graciela neighed like a colt—that she take ballet classes.

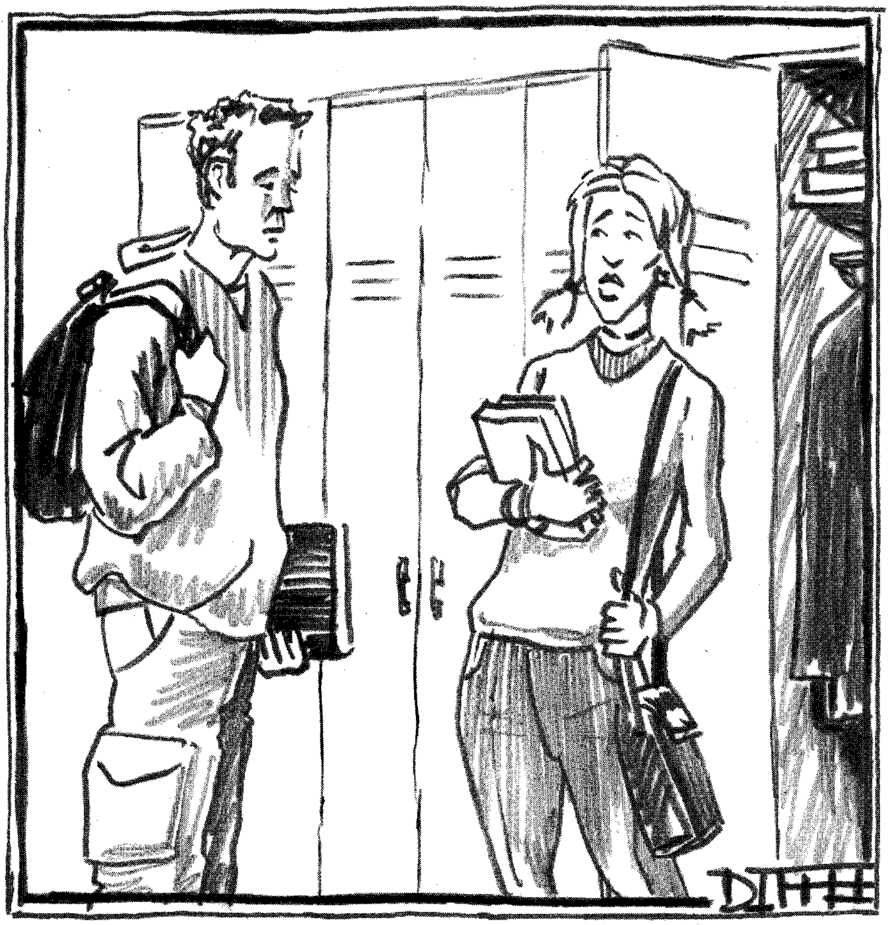
I never had the opportunity to see one of Twyla Tharp's events from the audience: not long after Graciela started working with her, she told me that Twyla was putting together a large, open-air piece called "Medley," with sixty dancers (*sixty dancers!*—instantly I took the measure of her ambition and her madness), and it might not be a bad idea for me to audition. Two weeks later, I started rehearsing with Twyla.

At eight o'clock on a balmy summer morning, a breath of mist rises from the grass of Central Park's Great Lawn and drifts above it. It's only the evaporation of the previous night's dew, a flimsy, transparent veil that vanishes in the first breeze, but if you are fortunate enough to be dancing on that meadow at that hour, it serves to reinforce the feeling that you are floating. Perhaps the police horses that are taken out for a run then share this sensation, and so do the members of a football team who, in the distance, seem to be swimming in invisible water as they go through their complicated drills. For me, those bright mornings when we rehearsed "Medley" were the first irrefutable proof that being alive was worth it.

We rehearsed three times a week. I would emerge from the subway a little early and wait for the other dancers at the entrance to the Park. Then the whole cluster of us would make our way to the heart of the Park: the immense expanse of green meadow marked off at one end by a toy lake and the tower of a small pseudo-medieval castle. In the evenings, a Shakespeare play was performed in a modest amphitheatre at the foot of the castle, as part of the festival that Joseph Papp was making into a beloved summer ritual.

Twyla didn't have the slightest interest in hearing the same applause every night from that stage, nor did she covet the theatre's dressing rooms, orchestra pit, and wooden bleachers that could hold almost two thousand spectators. If I interpret her thought correctly, she wanted her dancers to move across the meadow like one more element of nature; she dreamed that the spectators would walk among the dancers as if strolling through an orchard. She also wanted the dancers' movements to be "natural," and though there was an obvious contradiction between this aesthetic ambition and her technical demands, what she was seeking was an anti-formal language of movement that, following the trail blazed by Merce, would be unpredictable in its sequences and devoid of "theatrical" structure. She had decided that the work would begin in late afternoon and culminate during the long summer sunset, with a section of movements performed not merely in slow motion but at the pace of a leaf unfolding or the sun sinking, so that our bodies would imperceptibly reach a point of stasis just as the night's first stars were appearing.

In the early sunlight and the grassy scent of morning, surrounded by a dense green wall of trees, and isolated from the noise of Central Park West and Fifth Avenue, whose tall buildings framed the meadow, I felt as if my breathing were forming stanzas, the verses of a long hymn of thanks to Twyla, the Park, the sun. Out of the corner of my eye, I saw equestrians trotting past and football players hurling



"We'll always have the food court."

themselves through the air, and I liked to think that all of us—the horses and their riders, the athletes, and the dancers—were caught up in the delight of sharing this marvellous, improbable New York moment.

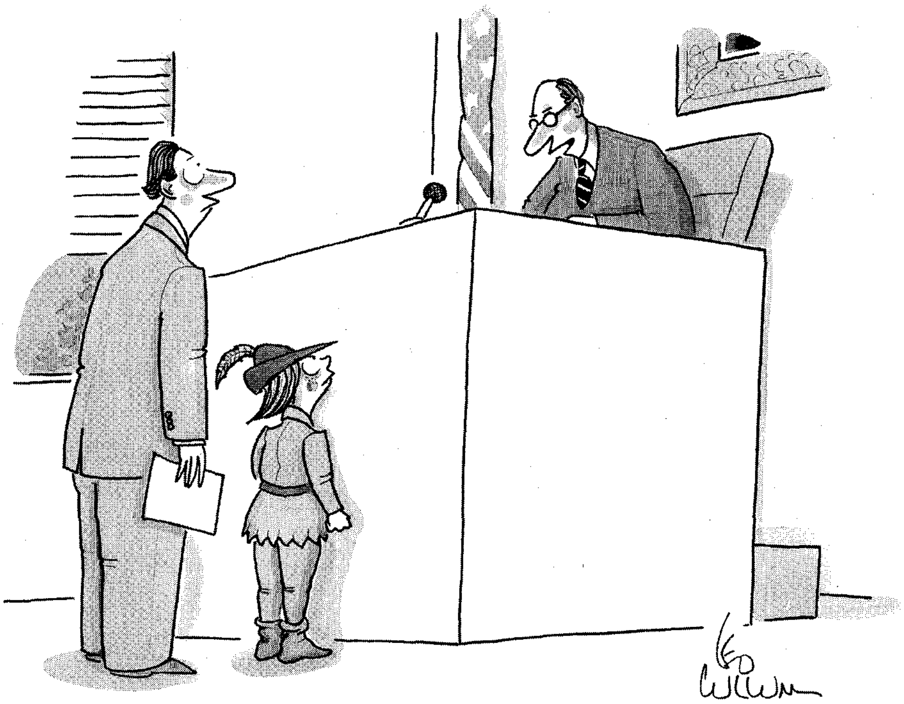
"That was awful," Twyla would say, with no smile of complicity but no impatience or rage, either. "Let's try it again." Twyla's efficiency was almost cartoonish: she arrived at rehearsals promptly, with a list of things to do during the session; she never wasted any time improvising but brought whole minutes of movement already worked out and memorized. She delegated tasks immediately—"Sara, you rehearse the adagio group. Sheela, go back over section three"—and before the session was over she gave everyone instructions for the following day's rehearsal. Just as Graciela had said, there was something almost military about her, but her talent for movement was so prodigious, and she was so smart, intense, and strange, that five minutes into the first rehearsal she had amazed and won me over.

Twyla had the compact body of an Olympic gymnast and, like a gymnast, seemed capable of changing course halfway through a leap, suddenly ricocheting off thin air in the opposite direction. She danced as competitively as an athlete, and with the same terrifying efficiency that she brought to rehearsals. She didn't draw out her movements, seeking some hidden sensuality or languor in the spaces between them, but she did prolong to a maximum the end of an off-center arabesque, just to see how long she could maintain that impossible position. She had a perverse way of showing off her technical prowess. For example, she would do a double pirouette while revolving her arms behind her like the blades of a windmill and then immediately, without the slightest pause to leave room for applause or a sigh of wonder, slide into another, equally difficult step, a leap that landed as a roll on the ground, say, and then go from there into another spin, as if to let it be known that she was after something far more exalted than our mere admiration. Her style of dancing was deadpan—but that was also her style when she wasn't moving. In her round face, with dark, round eyes, her mouth was a thin line whose ends barely turned upward to signify a smile. Her laugh was a quick bark, just one, like a Chihuahua's sneeze. At the end of rehearsal, she dismissed us with a "Thanks, everyone," as she looked through her datebook for her next task. She wasn't *simpática*, but she was irresistible. In the intimate, devout atmosphere of that first company, Twyla forged her own dance language, an idiosyncratic mixture of Fred Astaire, George Balanchine, and street cool which break dancers and ballet choreographers alike have now assimilated so thoroughly that we see it as spontaneous and natural.

Not even her obsessive efficiency can explain how Twyla managed to keep up her non-stop creative output. Whenever she created a dance, she had to imagine, invent, polish, and memorize the whole work. She had to rehearse her own movements, and work separately with each member of what she had begun to call the "core company," and with the rest of us. She had to train for at least an hour every day. On top of that, she had to find financing for her projects, obtain permits from the city and the Parks Department, design a program, do publicity. Above all, Twyla was constantly on the lookout for studios or large, cheap spaces where we could rehearse in the afternoons. Dance nomads, we went from space to space, a different one each week, some of them so shabby that Merce's studio seemed almost luxurious by contrast.

Wearing the same tennis shoes we used for morning rehearsals in the Park and the miscellaneous assortment of ragged T-shirts, worn-out leotards, and mismatched socks that became the fashion around that time, we felt divine. It was in the sixties that decency and modesty lost all connotations of elegance, and outlandishness, self-revelation, and fanatical sincerity were eroticized: *I'm poor—make something of it!* said our practice clothes, and dressed in them we prepared to learn to dance in a language I called Twylish.

We learned the adagio the same way she had composed it: first, the leg movements, a long series of figures—linked, broken up, unknotted, and tied together again—that were sketched out with the feet. Then we worked on the second part, for torso and arms. Both halves were horrendously complicated and difficult; they offered neither rhythmic support nor logical continuity. A work of classical ballet is relatively easy to memorize, because all the steps have a name and the rhythms are well



"Your client's refusal to grow up does not preclude him from being tried as an adult."

known—eight-four, two-four, two-three, slow, fast, or waltzed. Even Merce held on to the practice of dividing a phrase of movement into counts—"five-two-three, turn-two-three, seven-two-three, glide-two-three, and again!-two-three." But Twyla, during that stage of her evolution as a choreographer, had decided to abolish rhythm. And the movements we had to learn, with their apparently arbitrary sequence, full of dynamic breaks and the insolent, demotic style that their very design demanded, were like nothing anyone had ever seen. Memorizing one of her pieces turned out to be like trying to learn a madman's monologue—disjointed words whose secret keys we gradually found. During those early rehearsals, we could all be heard talking to ourselves: "Big step right, shift to the other leg, One! Two! Jump! And now turn and a hip thrust, head to the floor and—oops—*en dehors*, the soutenu is *en dehors!* Where did my arm go?"

It took us about two weeks to barely learn the two phrases of the adagio, which lasted, at most, a couple of minutes. At that point, Twyla told us, without a blink, that we could now join the two parts—that is, perform the leg and arm adagios together. It was like playing Ping-Pong and reciting "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" at once, and some of us never got the hang of it.

To save time, Twyla had the core-company dancers rehearse the chunks of choreography she had designed specifically with them in mind—solos, they might have been called in a less revolutionary time—with the background dancers who would perform those same movements simultaneously. In addition to Graciela, the core at that time included Rose Marie Wright, Sheela Raj, and Sara Rudner.

"It may be expensive for fragrance, but it's cheap for aromatherapy."

Rose Marie, the youngest of the group, was very tall, endlessly generous and patient as a teacher, and, when she danced, as fresh and glowing as her name. She was the only core member who had trained entirely as a classical ballet dancer. Sheela, who was even smaller than Twyla, had enormous liquid eyes and olive skin, and was perfect. Her nose was perfect, her toes were perfect, her shoulder blades were perfect. The carriage of her arms, her developpé, and her relevé were all perfect. Slender, agile, quick, and sinuous, she learned Twyla's impossible phrases on the first try and by the end of the rehearsal had already made them her own. One day, she hacked off the heavy jet-black braid that hung down to her waist. I believe it was an attempt to make herself uglier, because such an excess of beauty was beginning to strike us all as in questionable taste. But all she managed to do was unveil the perfection of the nape of her neck and worsen her effect on men, who gazed after her sadly wherever she went. Like Graciela, she was haunted by the spectre of *la migra;* the agents of the Immigration and Naturalization Service insisted that for the good of the United States of America two of the most promising dancers in the country had to be sent back to wherever they came from, and the following year they succeeded.

When Twyla was putting her various dancers in charge of different sections of the rehearsal, I always prayed that I would be working with Sara Rudner. The core company was perfectly egalitarian—everyone was a soloist and had to meet the same technical challenges—but we all knew that, even though the title didn't exist, Sara was the principal dancer. She had the beauty of a Russian icon of the Virgin Mary, every movement of her body sketched a perfect line, as if she herself were a pencil, and she danced with remarkable spiritual intensity (without Twyla's ostentation or Graciela's dramatic emphasis, yet with a total passion for movement). But it wasn't only that: Sara, calm, warmhearted, laughing, was for me the emotional center of the group. It never occurred to me to try to dance the way she did, but if I'd been given the chance to trade lives with someone else, I would have wanted to be born again as Sara Rudner.

Sara was living with someone and therefore led a separate life, but she sometimes came along on our outings. One day, Graciela arrived full of news about a place she had found in Chinatown that, for ninety-nine cents, served an enormous platter of noodles cooked with all kinds of vegetables and bits of meat. "I swear it to you! A *lot* of chicken. And meat! It is unbelievable!" she exclaimed. We were always hungry, but New York City's cheap ethnic restaurants were one of the reasons we felt privileged within our poverty. Graciela's

"A word to the wise. When the gods speak, they'd better say 'across-the-board tax cut.'"

discovery seemed so exceptional that we had to go and try it out, and even Sara went with us.

It was a strange period in our lives: none of the rest of us had boyfriends. I was still sharing an apartment with my mother, because with the money I earned as a waitress I couldn't have aspired to anything better than a small, sordid space like the one that Sheela and Graciela shared in the East Village. And I'd never had a boyfriend—only a few forlorn beddings.

Elaine went from one brief disaster to another, with lengthy recovery periods in between. Graciela lived through a series of agitated experiences that, since she was Graciela, went far beyond the mere problem of male-female relations and became philosophical inquiries, repostulations of the very nature of love, which always left her drained and bewildered.

Our closest male friends were gay, and, to our frustration, we endlessly confirmed that without exception they were more loyal, more fun, freer, and more imaginative than the handful of heterosexual men who inhabited our world. With our gay friends we held parties, danced, and went out. Sometimes Sheela would make curry. Sometimes I made mole. Elaine, who loved make-believe, would organize tea parties for Harry Sheppard and me. She would set the table with little embroidered napkins (in an unmatched assortment of patterns) and flowery porcelain cups (all chipped), then present us with a platter of tender ears of corn, barely roasted, along with a bowl of melted butter to dip them in. And we ate like wild boars.

No one ever asked me then, and I don't know if I myself understood, that I had a life that was not only extraordinary but *real*—the kind of life that doesn't happen by accident but is put together only slowly and with effort.

Twyla continued to work with the core company after "Medley," and I went on dancing with her, too, because she always needed more people—six or twelve women to use as a kind of corps de ballet. I remember in particular a performance at the Wadsworth Atheneum, in Hartford. While the core company performed the dance piece that had been commissioned by the Atheneum, the rest of us presented a retrospective of Twyla's early choreography in the museum auditorium. That performance allowed me to reconstruct in my own body the origins of her work, which had begun four or five years earlier (and included dances as inscrutable as "Tank Dive," in which a dancer, alone on the stage, held for two minutes the ninety-degree angle of a diver preparing to plunge). At the Metropolitan Museum, we performed "Dancing in the Streets of London and Paris, Continued in Stockholm and Sometimes Madrid," and this event received more attention from the press than "Medley" had. About fifteen dancers performed in it. I didn't think this new piece was as original in its movements or as atmospherically evocative as the performance in Central Park, but I remember with gratitude and astonishment the rehearsals held in the museum after hours. It was a deliciously clandestine pleasure to practice our movements (or "tasks," or "activities," as we representatives of the avant-garde said then) in the empty space of the Spanish Patio and on the great stairway at the museum's entrance. One night, I couldn't resist the temptation and lightly ran my hand over a medieval tapestry.

It was during this period that Merce, feet joined and head tilted, mentioned to me one afternoon that there was the possibility of a job teaching dance in South America.

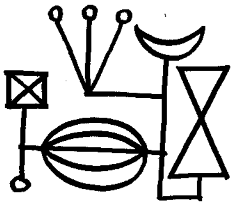
Someone else might have felt as if she'd just been handed a bouquet of flowers: Merce had noticed me! I felt as if a bucket of boiling, freezing water had been dumped over my head. Merce had walked over not to say, "I want you to dance with me," but "There's a gig a thousand miles away that might interest you." When I tallied up my achievements since coming to New York to dance, Merce's proposal seemed to me evidence of my failure. I was nineteen when Merce invited me into the advanced class, and I thought that a door was opening onto the best future I could have dreamed of. Now I was twenty, which in dance-world time is a very different age, and no one had ever said to me, "When you move, it enraptures my soul, dance forever." Like any young woman who aspires to be a dancer, I had no interest in being mediocre. I wanted to be used in the best possible way; I was convinced that I had great things to do onstage, that I harbored a dramatic presence of enormous force and projection. Nevertheless, I now came to the realization that I was accumulating more impediments than achievements. After so many years of training, it was time for me to be something more than just a capable performer, but I was painfully conscious of my intrinsic physical limitations: my flat feet, my lack of "turnout"—the rotation of the femur in the hollow of the pelvis, which allows the knees and feet to point completely outward, like those of an iguana. I was never going to achieve technical virtuosity; that was a fact.

I haven't mentioned that I was also severely myopic; I'd never been able to get used to contact lenses, and in those days optical surgery was an experimental technique used primarily in the Soviet Union. Every morning when I woke up, the first thing I did was grope for the thick glasses that had first been prescribed for me when I was six. I felt hopelessly lost without them. Onstage, blind and exposed before the audience, I became a frightened, gray animal. I was panicked at not being able to see and equally panicked at being seen. The performance in Hartford, during which I had to appear on a stage wearing only a flesh-colored maillot and the famous tennis shoes, had been a torture that I would not be able to endure again. I felt that each one of the defects I took stock of every day in front of the mirror—hips, legs, shoulders—was now exposed as if I were a side of beef hanging in the window of a butcher's shop. I learned that I was a coward.

I had another carefully guarded secret. Ever since, as a little girl, I had chosen modern dance, I had never wanted to be just a dancer: I had wanted to be like Martha Graham. I wanted to use my body to invent a brutal, mythical theatrical art that would be completely new. When, around the time I turned twenty, I first saw Robert Wilson's productions, I was choked with desolate, senseless rage: Wilson had ransacked my brain and stolen my ideas! His works were the same ones I had dreamed of, literally, in dreams so intense that when I woke up I wrote them all down, complete with indications for the lighting. Watching Twyla at work, so pitiless, so obsessive, I knew that I possessed no such capacity to move mountains, to sweep budgets, bureaucracies, and the lives of those around me along in my path in order to make my dreams real. I didn't dare ask even Elaine and Harry, who were more like family to me than my family, if they wanted to rehearse with me.

All these years later, I have no way of knowing how harsh or confused my evaluation of myself was at the age of twenty. I do know that when Merce suggested I go and teach classes in a distant country my usual state of anxiety and depression only worsened; I felt that everything—Merce's supposed rejection, my own solitude—was conspiring to drive me away from all I had ever dreamed of.

Even Manhattan, the magical realm of my adventures, suddenly began to seem like an island under siege. Thieves had looted the apartment I shared with my mother. Graciela and Sheela's apartment was also robbed (Graciela later recognized the thief on a bus). A woman I knew was raped. Someone broke in to rob Graciela and Sheela yet again. We were used to theft and violence, which were as much a part of everyday life as the plague of cockroaches that were the native fauna of New York City kitchens; but I sometimes felt great fear, and though I didn't dislike the hippies who thronged the streets of the Village, East and West, their world could be squalid. One afternoon, I went to a neighborhood clinic in search of a prescription for something to help me shake off a lingering cough. In the waiting room, I sat next to a girl who was covered with sores and was hallucinating under the effect of some psychedelic. In the low tide of early morning, as I walked to the Village cafeteria where I worked, I would have to sidestep the victims of heroin, the era's drug. Since the cafeteria was at one of the busiest corners in the Village, many young artists would ask permission to put their posters in the windows, announcing local performances and exhibits. With increasing frequency, we were also asked to post flyers bearing the photograph of some teen-age boy or barely adolescent girl—runaways, the proletariat of the new hippie nation. Sometimes parents came in, flyer in hand, to ask if we recognized their children, and their anguish was painful. But I understood and admired the young nomads, even when they ended up lying on a street corner, coughing and covered with sores; I, too, had an urgent need to separate from my mother.



From Merce, I'd received offers that I took as a rejection. From Twyla, I'd had no more than her habitual indifference, but the friendship that bound me to the members of the company made me clutch at one last straw. I talked to Sara. "I don't know. I don't know what to tell you," she said. "Talk to Twyla."

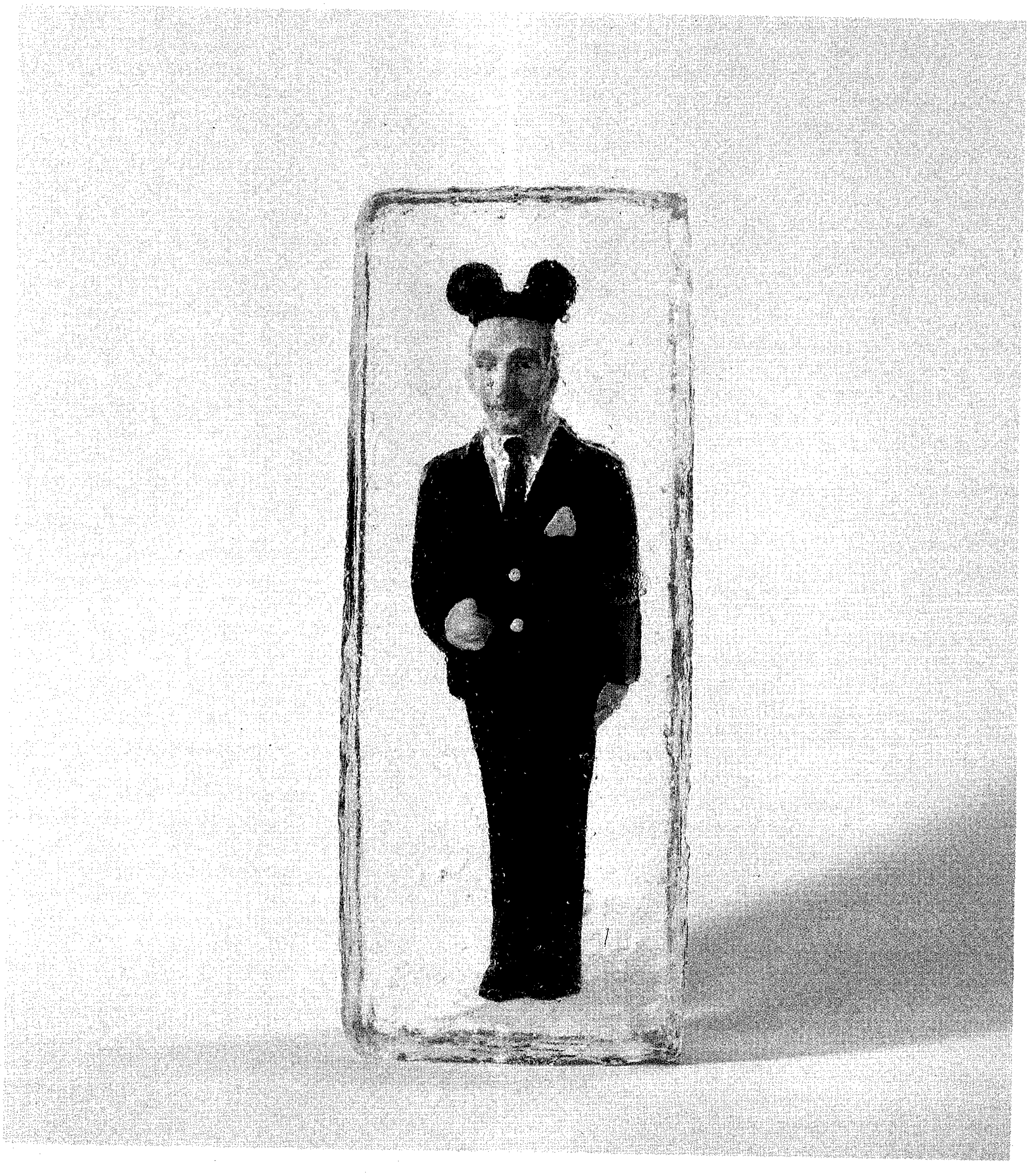
One afternoon after rehearsal, my heart in my throat, I lingered in the studio until the others had left. Twyla was putting her practice clothes away in her tote bag, ready to go. I told her I'd been offered a position abroad, teaching dance. What should I do? Busy with a shoelace, she lifted her eyes for a moment. "If I were you, I'd take it," she said. "You're not going to get anywhere hanging around here." ♦

(*Translated, from the Spanish, by Esther Allen.*)

FICTION

ICE MAN

BY HARUKI MURAKAMI



I married an ice man.

I first met him in a hotel at a ski resort, which is probably the perfect place to meet an ice man. The hotel lobby was crowded with animated young people, but the ice man was sitting by himself on a chair in the corner farthest from the fireplace, quietly reading a book. Although it was nearly noon, the clear, chilly light of an early-winter morning seemed to linger around him.

"Look, that's an ice man," my friend whispered.

At the time, though, I had absolutely no idea what an ice man was. My friend didn't, either. "He must be made of ice. That's why they call him an ice man." She said this to me with a serious expression, as if she were talking about a ghost or someone with a contagious disease.

The ice man was tall, and he seemed to be young, but his stubby, wirelike hair had patches of white in it, like pockets of unmelted snow. His cheekbones stood out sharply, like frozen stone, and his fingers were rimed with a white frost that looked as if it would never melt. Otherwise, though, the ice man seemed like an ordinary man. He wasn't what you'd call handsome, but you could see that he might be very attractive, depending on how you looked at him. In any case, something about him pierced me to the heart, and I felt this, more than anywhere, in his eyes. His gaze was as silent and transparent as the splinters of light that pass through icicles on a winter morning. It was like the single glint of life in an artificial body.

I stood there for a while and watched the ice man from a distance. He didn't look up. He just sat without moving, reading his book as though there were no one else around him.

The next morning, the ice man was in the same place again, reading a book in exactly the same way. When I went to the dining room for lunch, and when I came back from skiing with my friends that evening, he was still there, directing the same gaze onto the pages of the same book. The same thing happened the day after that. Even when the sun sank low, and the hour grew late, he sat in his chair, as quiet as the winter scene outside the window.

On the afternoon of the fourth day, I made up some excuse not to go out on the slopes. I stayed in the hotel by myself and loitered for a while in the lobby, which was as empty as a ghost town. The air there was warm and moist, and the room had a strangely dejected smell—the smell of snow that had been tracked in on the soles of people's shoes and was now melting in front of the fireplace. I looked out the windows, rustled through the pages of a newspaper or two, and then went over to the ice man, gathered my nerve, and spoke.

I tend to be shy with strangers and, unless I have a very good reason, I don't usually talk to people I don't know. But I felt compelled to talk to the ice man no matter what. It was my last night at the hotel, and if I let this chance go by I feared I would never get to talk with an ice man again.

"Don't you ski?" I asked him, as casually as I could.

He turned his face toward me slowly, as if he'd heard a noise in the distance, and he stared at me with those eyes. Then he calmly shook his head. "I don't ski," he said. "I just like to sit here and read and look at the snow." His words formed white clouds above him, like comic-strip captions. I could actually see the words in the air, until he rubbed them away with a frost-rimed finger.

I had no idea what to say next. I just blushed and stood there. The ice man looked into my eyes and seemed to smile slightly.

"Would you like to sit down?" he asked. "You're interested in me, aren't you? You want to know what an ice man is." Then he laughed. "Relax, there's nothing to worry about. You won't catch a cold just by talking to me."

We sat side by side on a sofa in the corner of the lobby and watched the snowflakes dance outside the window. I ordered a hot cocoa and drank it, but the ice man didn't drink anything. He didn't seem to be any better at conversation than I was. Not only that, but we didn't seem to have anything in common to talk about. At first, we talked about the weather. Then we talked about the hotel. "Are you here by yourself?" I asked the ice man. "Yes," he answered. He asked me if I liked skiing. "Not very much," I said. "I only came because my friends insisted. I actually rarely ski at all."

There were so many things I wanted to know. Was his body really made of ice? What did he eat? Where did he live in the summer? Did he have a family? Things like that. But the ice man didn't talk about himself, and I held back from asking personal questions.

Instead, the ice man talked about me. I know it's hard to believe, but he somehow knew all about me. He knew about the members of my family; he knew my age, my likes and dislikes, the state of my health, the school I was attending, and the friends I was seeing. He even knew things that had happened to me so far in the past that I had long since forgotten them.

"I don't understand," I said, flustered. I felt as if I were naked in front of a stranger. "How do you know so much about me? Can you read people's minds?"

"No, I can't read minds or anything like that. I just know," the ice man said. "I just know. It's as if I were looking deep into ice, and, when I look at you like this, things about you become clearly visible to me."

I asked him, "Can you see my future?"

"I can't see the future," he said slowly. "I can't take any interest in the future at all. More precisely, I have no conception of a future. That's because ice has no future. All it has is the past enclosed within it. Ice is able to preserve things that way—very cleanly and distinctly and as vividly as though they were still alive. That's the essence of ice."

"That's nice," I said and smiled. "I'm relieved to hear that. After all, I don't really want to know what my future is."

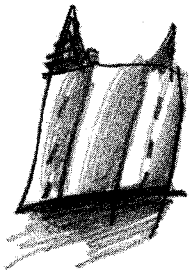
We met again a number of times once we were back in the city. Eventually, we started dating. We didn't go to movies, though, or to coffee shops. We didn't even go to restaurants. The ice man rarely ate anything to speak of. Instead, we always sat on a bench in the park and talked about things—anything except the ice man himself.

"Why is that?" I asked him once. "Why don't you talk about yourself? I want to know more about you. Where were you born? What are your parents like? How did you happen to become an ice man?"

BURT PAYNE 3 & STEVE HILLENBURG, "FROZEN WALT DOLL" (1996)/TRACK 18 GALLERY, SANTA MONICA/PHOTOGRAPH BY EILEEN TRAVELL

The ice man looked at me for a while, and then he shook his head. “I don’t know,” he said quietly and clearly, exhaling a puff of white words into the air. “I know the past of everything else. But I myself have no past. I don’t know where I was born, or what my parents looked like. I don’t even know if I had parents. I have no idea how old I am. I don’t know if I have an age at all.”

The ice man was as lonely as an iceberg in the dark night.



I fell seriously in love with this ice man. The ice man loved me just as I was—in the present, without any future. In turn, I loved the ice man just as he was—in the present, without any past. We even started to talk about getting married.

I had just turned twenty, and the ice man was the first person I had really loved. At the time, I couldn’t begin to imagine what it meant to love an ice man. But even if I’d fallen in love with a normal man I doubt I’d have had a clearer idea of what love meant.

My mother and my older sister were strongly opposed to my marrying the ice man. “You’re too young to get married,” they said. “Besides, you don’t know a thing about his background. You don’t even know where he was born or when. How could we possibly tell our relatives that you’re marrying someone like that? Plus, this is an ice man we’re talking about, and what are you going to do if he suddenly melts away? You don’t seem to understand that marriage requires a real commitment.”

Their worries were unfounded, though. After all, an ice man isn’t really made of ice. He isn’t going to melt, no matter how warm it gets. He’s called an ice man because his body is as cold as ice, but what he’s made of is different from ice, and it’s not the kind of cold that takes away other people’s heat.

So we got married. Nobody blessed the wedding, and no friends or relatives were happy for us. We didn’t hold a ceremony, and, when it came to having my name entered in his family register, well, the ice man didn’t even have one. We just decided, the two of us, that we were married. We bought a little cake and ate it together, and that was our modest wedding.

We rented a tiny apartment, and the ice man made a living by working at a cold-storage meat facility. He could take any amount of cold, and he never felt tired, no matter how hard he worked. So the ice man’s employer liked him very much, and paid him a better salary than the other employees. The two of us lived a happy life together, without bothering or being bothered by anyone.

When the ice man made love to me, I saw in my mind a piece of ice that I was sure existed somewhere in quiet solitude. I thought that the ice man probably knew where that piece of ice was. It was frozen hard, so hard that I thought nothing could be harder. It was the biggest piece of ice in the world. It was somewhere very far away, and the ice man was passing on the memories of that ice to me and to the world. At first, I felt confused when the ice man made love to me. But, after a while, I got used to it. I even started to love having sex with the ice man. In the night, we silently shared that enormous piece of ice, in which hundreds of millions of years—all the pasts of the world—were stored.

There were no problems to speak of in our married life. We loved each other deeply, and nothing came between us. We wanted to have a child, but that didn’t seem to be possible. It may have been that human genes and ice-man genes didn’t combine easily. In any case, it was partly because we didn’t have children that I found myself with time on my hands. I would finish up all the housework in the morning, and then have nothing to do. I didn’t have any friends to talk to or go out with, and I didn’t have much to do with the people in our neighborhood, either. My mother and sister were still angry with me for marrying the ice man and showed no sign of ever wanting to see me again. And although, as the months passed, the people around us started talking to him from time to time, deep in their hearts they still hadn’t accepted the ice man or me, who had married him. We were different from them, and no amount of time could bridge the gap between us.

So, while the ice man was working, I stayed at home by myself, reading books and listening to music. I tend to prefer staying at home, anyway, and I don’t especially mind being alone. But I

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was still young, and doing the same thing day after day eventually began to bother me. It wasn't the boredom that hurt. It was the repetition.

That was why I said to my husband one day, "How would it be if the two of us went away on a trip somewhere, just for a change?"

"A trip?" the ice man said. He narrowed his eyes and stared at me. "What on earth would we take a trip for? Aren't you happy being here with me?"

"It's not that," I said. "I am happy. But I'm bored. I feel like travelling somewhere far away and seeing things that I've never seen before. I want to see what it's like to breathe new air. Do you understand? Besides, we haven't even had our honeymoon yet. We have some savings, and you have plenty of vacation days coming to you. Isn't it about time that we got away somewhere and took it easy for a while?"

The ice man heaved a deep frozen sigh. It crystallized in midair with a ringing sound. He laced his long fingers together on his knees. "Well, if you really want to go on a trip so badly, I don't have anything against it. I'll go anywhere if it'll make you happy. But do you know where you want to go?"

"How about visiting the South Pole?" I said. I chose the South Pole because I was sure that the ice man would be interested in going somewhere cold. And, to be honest, I had always wanted to travel there. I wanted to wear a fur coat with a hood, and I wanted to see the aurora australis and a flock of penguins.

When I said this, my husband looked straight into my eyes, without blinking, and I felt as if a pointed icicle were piercing all the way through to the back of my head. He was silent for a while, and finally he said, in a glinting voice, "All right, if that's what you want, then let's go to the South Pole. You're really sure that this is what you want?"

I wasn't able to answer right away. The ice man's stare had been on me so long that the inside of my head felt numb. Then I nodded.

As time passed, though, I came to regret ever having brought up the idea of going to the South Pole. I don't know why, but it seemed that as soon as I spoke the words "South Pole" to my husband something changed inside

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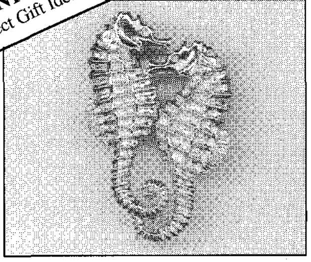

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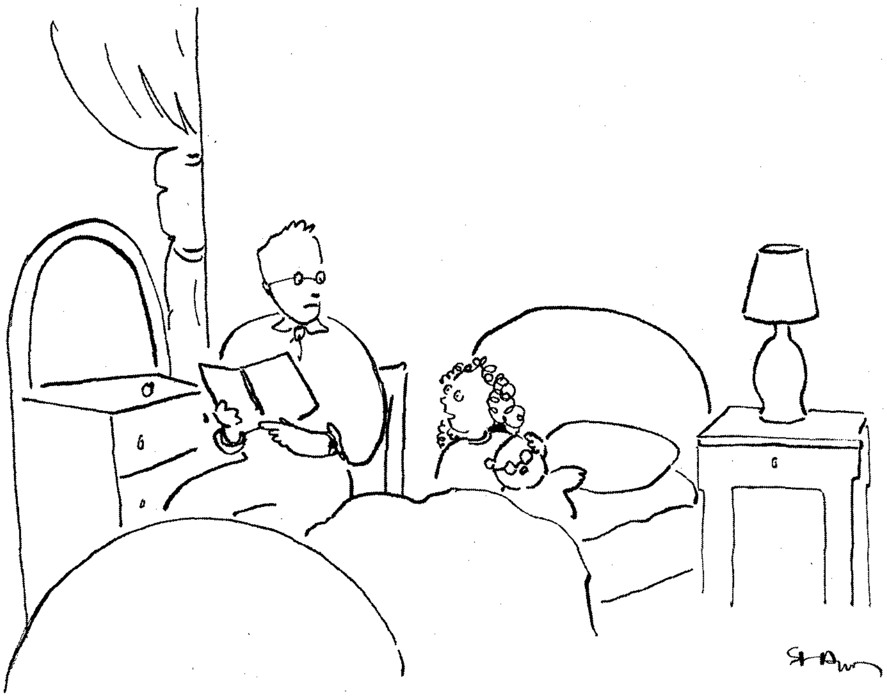


"Is the Itsy Bitsy Spider obsessive-compulsive?"

• •

him. His eyes became sharper, his breath came out whiter, and his fingers were frostier. He hardly talked to me anymore, and he stopped eating entirely. All of this made me feel very insecure.

Five days before we were supposed to leave, I got up my nerve and said, "Let's forget about going to the South Pole. When I think about it now, I realize that it's going to be terribly cold there, and it might not be good for our health. I'm starting to think that it might be better for us to go someplace more ordinary. How about Europe? Let's go have a real vacation in Spain. We can drink wine, eat paella, and see a bullfight or something."

But my husband paid no attention to what I was saying. He stared off into space for a few minutes. Then he declared, "No, I don't particularly want to go to Spain. Spain is too hot for me. It's too dusty, and the food is too spicy. Besides, I've already bought tickets for the South Pole. And we've got a fur coat and fur-lined boots for you. We can't let all that go to waste. Now that we've come this far, we can't not go."

The truth is that I was scared. I had a premonition that if we went to the South Pole something would happen to us that we might not be able to undo. I was having this bad dream over and over again. It was always the same. I'd be out taking a walk and I'd fall into a deep crevasse that had opened up in the ground. Nobody would find me, and I'd freeze down there. Shut up inside the ice, I'd stare up at the sky. I'd be conscious, but I wouldn't be able to move, not even a finger. I'd realize that moment by moment I was becoming the past. As people looked at me, at what I'd become, they were looking at the past. I was a scene moving backward, away from them.

Then I'd wake up and find the ice man sleeping beside me. He always slept without breathing, like a dead man.

But I loved the ice man. I cried, and my tears dripped onto his cheek and he woke up and held me in his arms. "I had a bad dream," I told him.

"It was only a dream," he said. "Dreams come from the past, not the future. You aren't bound by them. The dreams are bound by you. Do you understand that?"

"Yes," I said, though I wasn't convinced.

I couldn't find a good reason to cancel the trip, so in the end my husband and I boarded a plane for the South Pole. The stewardesses were all taciturn. I wanted to look at the view out the window, but the clouds were so thick that I couldn't see anything. After a while, the window was covered with a layer of ice. My husband sat silently reading a book. I felt none of the excitement of heading off on a vacation. I was just going through the motions and doing things that had already been decided on.

When we went down the stairs and stepped off onto the ground of the South Pole, I felt my husband's body lurch. It lasted less than a blink of an eye, just half a second, and his expression didn't change at all, but I saw it happen. Something inside the ice man had been secretly, violently shaken. He stopped and looked at the sky, then at his hands. He heaved a huge breath. Then he looked at me and grinned. He said, "Is this the place you wanted to visit?"

"Yes," I said. "It is."

The South Pole was lonely beyond anything I had expected. Almost no one lived there. There was just one small, featureless town, and in that town there was one hotel, which was, of course, also small and featureless. The South Pole was not a tourist destination. There wasn't a single penguin. And you couldn't see the aurora australis. There were no trees, flowers, rivers, or ponds. Everywhere I went, there was only ice. Everywhere, as far as I could see, the wasteland of ice stretched on and on.

My husband, though, walked enthusiastically from place to place as if he couldn't get enough of it. He learned the local language quickly, and spoke with the townspeople in a voice that had the hard rumble of an avalanche. He conversed with them for hours with a serious expression on his face, but I had no way of knowing what they were talking about. I felt as though my husband had betrayed me and left me to care for myself.

There, in that wordless world surrounded by thick ice, I eventually lost all my strength. Bit by bit, bit by bit. In the end, I didn't even have the energy to feel irritated anymore. It was as though I had lost the compass of my emotions somewhere. I had lost track of where I was heading, I had lost track of time, and I had lost all sense of my own self. I don't know when this started or when it ended, but when I regained consciousness I was in a world of ice, an eternal winter drained of all color, closed in alone.

Even after most of my sensation had gone, I still knew this much. My husband at the South Pole was not the same man as before. He looked out for me just as he had always done, and he spoke to me kindly. I could tell that he truly meant the things he said to me. But I also knew that he was no longer the ice man I had met in the hotel at the ski resort.

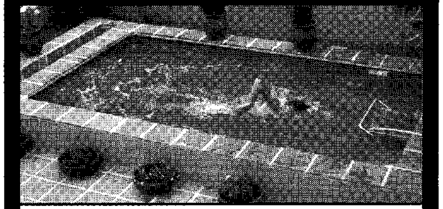
There was no way I could bring this to anybody's attention, though. Everyone at the South Pole liked him, and, anyway, they couldn't understand a word I said. Puffing out their white breath, they would tell jokes and argue and sing songs in their own language while I sat by myself in our room, looking out at a gray sky that was unlikely to clear for months to come. The airplane that had brought us there had long since gone, and after a while the runway was covered with a hard layer of ice, just like my heart.

"Winter has come," my husband said. "It's going to be a very long winter, and there will be no more planes, or ships, either. Everything has frozen over. It looks as though we'll have to stay here until next spring."

About three months after we arrived at the South Pole, I realized that I was pregnant. The child that I gave birth to would be a little ice man—I knew this. My womb had frozen over, and my amniotic fluid was slush. I could feel its chill inside me. My child would be just like his father, with eyes like icicles and frost-rimed fingers. And our new family would never again set foot outside the South Pole. The eternal past, heavy beyond all comprehension, had us in its grasp. We would never shake it off.

Now there's almost no heart left in me. My warmth has gone very far away. Sometimes I forget that warmth ever existed. In this place, I am lonelier than anyone else in the world. When I cry, the ice man kisses my cheek, and my tears turn to ice. He takes those frozen teardrops in his hand and puts them on his tongue. "See how I love you," he says. He is telling the truth. But a wind sweeping in from nowhere blows his white words back and back into the past. ♦

(*Translated, from the Japanese, by Richard L. Peterson.*)



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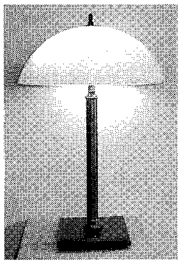

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A CRITIC AT LARGE

THE LONG MARCH

What the civil-rights movement looked like when it was still happening.

BY NICHOLAS LEMANN

The recent fall of a Senate majority leader for the crime of praising a centenarian colleague who had once been a leader of the segregationist movement made for an excellent demonstration of the marvellous, and misleading, clarity of historical retrospection. Everybody now knows, it seems, that the civil-rights movement was a good thing, and that its opponents were so patently wrong that, unless they are elaborately penitent, they can have no place in our public life. (At the same time, it would have been fine for Trent Lott to send off Strom Thurmond—whom everybody in Washington had long been treating as a lovable huggy-bear—with an encomium to his wonderfulness, as long as it didn't specifically mention the main cause with which he was associated.)

The rules of acceptable political behavior were not at all so clear at the time. In the South, when civil rights was still an open question only a brave few Democrats supported it, and one is hard pressed to think of any Republicans who did. In 1964, the Republican Presidential nominee, Barry Goldwater, ran as an opponent of mandatory school desegregation and of the landmark Civil Rights Act, which Congress had just passed. George H. W. Bush, campaigning for the Senate that year, came out against the Civil Rights Act. Ronald Reagan, then a popular conservative speaker preparing to run for governor of California, strongly opposed it. During the Lott affair, the commentator Charles Krauthammer, in a dump-Lott column in the Washington *Post*, wrote that neoconservatives like him "oppose affirmative action on grounds of colorblindness and in defense of the original vision of the civil rights movement: judging people by the content of their character and not the color of their skin." As Krauthammer surely knows from firsthand experience, movements and their visions always look a lot simpler from the outside and after the fact. If the civil-rights movement were suddenly to reappear as it really was, political officeholders would no more be unanimously for it than they were at the time.

The event that Krauthammer was obliquely referring to by bringing up the content of character and the color of skin was the March on Washington in August, 1963, where Martin Luther King, Jr., made his magnificent "I have a dream" speech, from which that line comes. The march was originally planned by the movement's radical wing, which was going to end the day by having the marchers move, en masse and unlawfully, into the hallways of the Capitol. A series of compromises brought the movement's moderate wing (the N.A.A.C.P., the Urban League, and the United Automobile Workers, as well as King himself) on board. Still, the chief organizer was the former Communist and still socialist Bayard Rustin, who titled the event the "March for Jobs and Freedom"—and what he meant by "jobs and freedom" was a degree of state intervention in the economy that nobody would dare propose today. The long list of those who appeared onstage at the march included Bob Dylan, Walter Reuther, Roy Wilkins, Josephine Baker, Odetta, Marlon Brando, A. Philip Randolph, and Charlton Heston. By the time King spoke, much of the crowd had drifted away. The big behind-the-scenes drama centered on John Lewis, who was then the head of the Student Nonviolent Coördinating Committee, and is now a veteran congressman from Georgia. Lewis had drafted a speech that said, "We will march through the South, through the heart of Dixie, the way Sherman did. . . . We shall pursue our own scorched-earth policy." Washington's Catholic archbishop refused to give the invocation unless Lewis toned it down, and finally, under heavy pressure from the organizers, he did. So even the era's most celebrated moment was not nearly as consensual as everybody now remembers.

The Library of America's new, two-volume anthology "Reporting Civil Rights: American Journalism 1941-1973" ($80) is a useful corrective to the way memory has domesticated the movement. As one reads through a hundred and eighty-eight chronologically ordered articles, the movement's true messiness, radicalism, internal disorganization, high failure rate, and lack of internal agreement become manifest. These are absorbing volumes even if read straight through, and they make for a valuable reference work that will reward occasional dipping in. There are, inevitably, moments of hokey overwriting—"Once more down the old familiar highways into that passionately alive and violent country," Karl Fleming begins a piece in *Newsweek*, and he's soon on to days of smothering heat and nights of honeysuckle—but fewer than you'd expect. It helps that the Library of America's anonymous compilers have not taken the terms "reporting" and "journalism" literally: they have supplemented the newspaper stuff with lots of essays, memoirs, manifestos, and book excerpts, and without them the anthology wouldn't be nearly as good. King's "Letter from a Birmingham Jail," James Baldwin's "The Fire Next Time," the reminiscences of Lillian Smith and Anne Moody, John Howard Griffin's "Black Like Me"—

Martin Luther King, Jr., a week before his assassination, at a demonstration in Memphis. Photograph by Ernest C. Withers.

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who would have wanted a definition of "reporting civil rights" so strict that it excluded them?

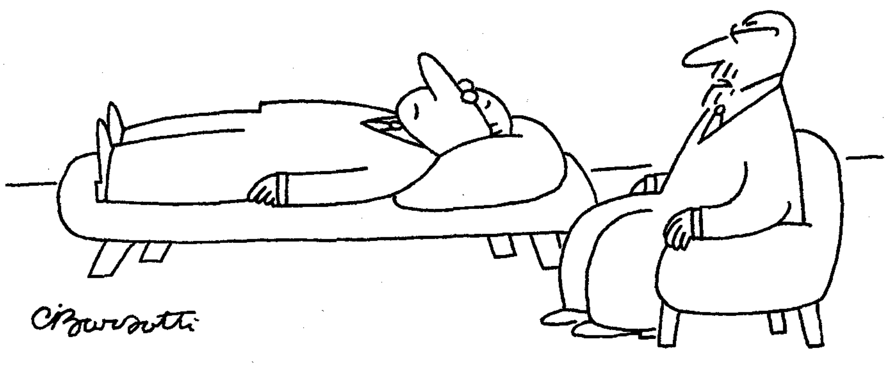
Many famous bylines—Joan Didion, David Halberstam, Tom Wicker, Hunter S. Thompson, John Steinbeck, Ralph Ellison, Langston Hughes, John Hersey, Garry Wills, and Alice Walker, to name a few—appear in "Reporting Civil Rights," but it's a particular pleasure to read less well-known writers whose work, at least in these pages, is just as good or better. Journalists I didn't start reading until they were in the settled columnist-essayist phase of their careers—like Carl T. Rowan and Dan Wakefield—appear here as reporters on the scene. The Negro press, which was then vital and important, is well represented, with first-rate articles from the Pittsburgh *Courier*, the Baltimore *Afro-American*, and the New York *Amsterdam News*, among others, and there is a lot of material that demonstrates what a loss it was when the big-format mass magazines *Life*, *Look*, *Collier's*, and *The Saturday Evening Post* went out of business. Among the specific attractions of the volumes are contributions by Louis E. Lomax, writing as a secret sharer about life inside the black establishment; Michael Thelwell, who performs a similar function for the radical student movement, and also writes beautifully; August Meier, who contributed a very smart essay on King, which, as a work of analysis, stands out in a collection that is naturally much stronger on dramatic firsthand description; and William Bradford Huie, the hot-blooded investigative reporter who bribed confessions out of the murderers of Emmett Till. The outstanding piece of investigative reporting is an hour-by-hour inside account of the integration of the University of Mississippi, in 1962. The authors, George B. Leonard, T. George Harris, and Christopher S. Wren, convey both the terrifying violence and danger of that event (for a while, it looked as if the segregationist mob would actually defeat the federal forces) and the duplicity of Governor Ross Barnett, who kept making and breaking deals with the Kennedy Administration while the situation in Oxford spun out of control.

What's most valuable about "Reporting Civil Rights" is that it provides a history of the civil-rights movement written by people who weren't allowed to peek ahead to the ending. All the complexity and contingency of the movement comes through; it becomes hard to argue that the movement was centrally about the kind of color-blind, meritocratic ideology implied by King's "content of our character" rhetoric. Even the name is misleading, because it implies that overturning the South's Jim Crow laws was the one great, agreed-upon cause. As "Reporting Civil Rights" makes clear, there were several distinct elements within the movement: Old Lefties, including some Communists; New Lefties; labor unionists; black nationalists; church people; and liberal do-gooders. Hence the movement's many contending and sometimes conflicting goals, among them changes in the structure of Negro leadership (in particular, unseating the N.A.A.C.P. from its traditional position of dominance), a remaking of black consciousness, left-wing economic policies, better jobs and better housing for blacks, and black political power. Although the movement was biracial, and wouldn't have succeeded if it hadn't been, its white and black members generally had different views of what its main purpose was—the whites being much more likely to think of color blindness and integration as the goals, the blacks being more likely to think in terms of racial advancement. King made a point of befriending Malcolm X, who regularly said that he wasn't interested in civil rights or integration; and King's well-publicized association with Stokely Carmichael, of SNCC, didn't end when, in 1966, Carmichael unveiled the electrifying, polarizing, and implicitly non-nonviolent phrase "black power," during a march that featured them both. When the movement succeeded, it wasn't completely clear which element was winning, and that ambiguity survives today—it's why both sides in the affirmative-action fight, for example, can claim to be pursuing the true goals of the civil-rights movement.

The racial problem that makes the strongest impression in the pages of "Reporting Civil Rights" is not legal segregation (which many African-Americans didn't mind then and feel nostalgic about now) but something more basic: fear and a lack of dignity. It seems almost too obvious to mention that during Jim Crow black people in the South did not have reliable recourse to the legal system; even if most whites were benign, those who weren't could do anything they wanted to a Negro and get away with it. Violence within the black community usually went officially unpunished, so it, too, was relatively risk-free for the perpetrators. The corrosive terror of living with the constant possibility of unpunishable vigilantism comes across vividly in "Reporting Civil Rights." In 1942, Hugh Gloster, a professor of English at Morehouse College, was taken off a bus in Mississippi and beaten so badly that he had to be taken to the hospital—not a crime. In 1961, Herbert Lee, a Negro cotton farmer in Mississippi who had tried to register to vote, was shot in the head at point-blank range, in a public place in broad daylight, by a white state legislator—not a crime. This sort of low-grade, and sometimes not so low-grade, terrorism continued through the sixties. In Oxford in 1962, segregationist snipers fired freely on members of the National Guard. In Jackson in 1963, Medgar Evers, the field secretary of the Mississippi N.A.A.C.P., was gunned down in front of his house. The 1963 church bombing in Birmingham that killed four girls came at the end of fifty anti-Negro bombings, all unsolved by the local authorities. In Philadelphia, Mississippi, in 1964, three young civil-rights workers were murdered by the Klan, and their bodies buried in a dam, with the active support of the town's top law-enforcement officials. And these were cases involving respectable middle-class people, not the vulnerable black poor, who had it far worse. In "Letter from a Birmingham Jail," written just a few months before the "I have a dream" speech, King conveys this sense of indignity and exposure with remarkable power:

> Perhaps it is easy for those who have never felt the stinging darts of segregation to say "Wait." But when you have seen vicious mobs lynch your mothers and fathers at will and drown your sisters and brothers at whim; when you have seen hate-filled policemen curse, kick and even kill your black brothers and sisters with impunity; when you see the vast majority of your 20 million Negro brothers smothering in an air-tight cage of poverty in the midst of an affluent society . . . when you are harried by day and haunted by night by the fact that you are a Negro, never quite knowing what to expect next, and you are plagued with inner fears and outer resentments; when you are forever fighting a degenerating sense of "nobodiness"—then you will understand why we find it difficult to wait.

The problem that King is discussing here is, in some ways, a very old one: black people had never been treated the



"This is not about Schmidt—it's about you."

same as everybody else in America. But the period of waiting really dated back to Reconstruction. President Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863, and Congress and the states passed the Thirteenth Amendment, which abolished slavery, in 1865. The Fourteenth Amendment (1868) gave the freed slaves legal rights, and the Fifteenth (1870) gave them the right to vote. The former Confederacy accepted the Thirteenth Amendment, but though it voted for the others, it nullified them in practice. During Reconstruction, it became obvious that, especially in the deep South, the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments would be without effect unless federal troops came to the South and enforced them at gunpoint. Support for this died out quickly in the North and never existed in the South, and the last time it happened in postbellum America was in January, 1875, in New Orleans and Vicksburg, Mississippi. Reconstruction ended formally, in 1877, on the explicit understanding that the federal government would no longer intervene militarily to enforce the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments.

This bargain that the South made with the nation as a whole—Thirteenth Amendment yes, Fourteenth and Fifteenth no—was durable to the point of seeming unchangeable. For much of the twentieth century, civil rights for Negroes weren't even on the liberal agenda. President Woodrow Wilson honored D. W. Griffith's pro-Klan "Birth of a Nation" with a White House screening. President Franklin Roosevelt, who was probably the most powerful liberal politician in American history, and whose wife was a crusader on the subject, did not attempt to dismantle segregation. The South was an essential element in the Democratic Party's coalition, after all; and the country as a whole was, at best, unused to thinking of segregation as a problem. So the civil-rights movement had to pursue a series of related projects: awakening the long-slumbering racial conscience of non-Southern white Americans; organizing the black South politically by nontraditional means (since most black Southerners were prohibited from voting); changing the consciousness of all of black America to be less accepting of the situation; and, critically important, persuading the federal government not just to endorse the movement's goals but to use its power to enforce them.

The anthology's first document is A. Philip Randolph's call, in 1941, for a march on Washington "for jobs and equal participation in national defense" (Franklin Roosevelt, through persuasion and concession, forestalled the march), and following it are a number of pieces demonstrating that attempts to erase informal "color lines" in the housing and job markets, Negro voter-registration efforts in the South, and the refusal of blacks to sit in the back of the bus all predated what we now think of as the beginning of the civil-rights movement. The struggle was necessarily waged on many fronts, and one of the most important was the press; in fact, as "Reporting Civil Rights" reminds us, much of the press was effectively part of the movement, and an indispensable part. One reason that the Montgomery bus boycott was a breakthrough was that it made Martin Luther King the movement's first true media star. King was shockingly young and oratorically spectacular, and the national press—in particular, *Time* and *Life*—conferred a celebrity status on him that it had never given A. Philip Randolph, Roy Wilkins, Bayard Rustin, Thurgood Marshall, or any of the movement's earlier leaders. King and his advisers had a genius for generating publicity that engaged the sympathies of liberal whites in the North. It wasn't just the strategy of nonviolence and the rhetoric of hope and redemption that made King successful; it was the staging of events in order to play to the national audience. King's local attempts to achieve broad-gauge progress for blacks failed repeatedly in Northern cities like Chicago and Cleveland; in Southern towns like Albany, Georgia, and St. Augustine, Florida; and even, arguably, in the movement's sacred sites, like Birmingham, Montgomery, and Selma. But King was great at losing the battle while winning the war—in August Meier's phrase, at producing "local failure and national victory." The ongoing real-life morality play he mounted—in which civil-rights heroes contended with white-resistance villains like Bull Connor, Jim Clark, and George Wallace—profoundly affected events in Washington. The real fruit of the Birmingham campaign was the 1964 Civil Rights Act, the real fruit of the Selma campaign the 1965 Voting Rights Act.

The movement's success depended upon a ricochet effect among the various power centers of American society, and the press was only one of them. Thurgood Marshall and the N.A.A.C.P. Legal Defense Fund began filing lawsuits against segregated educational institutions back in the thirties. The Second World War subjected Northern black soldiers to Southern segregation (both in the military, which maintained segregated units throughout the war, and in the civilian world, when they were on leave) and gave Southern black soldiers a taste of life outside the Jim Crow system, and this, thanks in part to publicity in the Negro press, inflamed black public opinion. These wartime sentiments produced federal anti-discrimination executive orders signed by Roosevelt and Harry Truman. They helped spur the very early interstate bus rides by the Fellowship of Reconciliation. The Brown decision helped inspire the Montgomery movement. The Montgomery movement's success and the attendant publicity contributed to President Eisenhower's decision to send federal troops to Little Rock. And so on. This kind of multilayered, cross-jurisdictional activity was necessary because the opposition to the movement was a lot more powerful and sophisticated than the gap-toothed Klansmen and corpulent small-town sheriffs who were its public foils. The Brown cases, for example, pitted Marshall against, among others, a former Secretary of State, James F. Byrnes, and a former Democratic Presidential nominee, John W. Davis; our current Chief Justice, then a Supreme Court law clerk, wrote a memorandum to his boss laying out a justification for a dissent from the unanimous decision.

"Reporting Civil Rights" has a few lacunae (where's Gunnar Myrdal?), but the most important absence is of material hostile to the civil-rights movement. Having made the decision not to limit themselves to journalism per se, the editors had the opportunity to give us some flavor of the conversation among the movement's adversaries, as they do so well for the conversation among its allies. But the ideological range of the pieces runs from journalistic-neutral to left; by my count, there are only two contributions from conservatives, Norman Podhoretz's "My Negro Problem—And Ours," and Tom Wolfe's "Mau-Mauing the Flak-Catchers," and neither of those writers was so identified at the time that he published his article. Only one piece in "Reporting Civil Rights," a long, overwrought excerpt from a 1956 book by Robert Penn Warren called "Segregation: The Inner Conflict in the South," gets across the feeling of the respectable white sentiment that I grew up around in Louisiana—opposed to civil rights, but with a paternalism that was deeply convinced of its own benevolence and painful honesty about the race problem, and deeply embarrassed by the lynchings and snarling mobs that were what the North knew of segregationism. (If only the movement had been more patient, the patrician white South thought, it wouldn't have brought such creatures crawling out of the swamp.) It's true that, as several contributions say in passing, a good deal of the written case against civil rights took the form of crude mimeographs and newsletters, but there were also publications, like the *Dan Smoot Report* and the John Birch Society's *American Opinion*, that were hardly less mainstream than, on the left, the *Southern Patriot* or *Ramparts*, which did make the cut for "Reporting Civil Rights"—and there was the entirely presentable work of James J. Kilpatrick, then the editorial-page editor of the Richmond *News Leader*, and soon to be a familiar Washington columnist and television personality. Here's a passage from his 1962 book "The Southern Case for School Segregation":

> Manifestly, the resistance to a coerced racial "equality" is wide and deep. Why is this so? The answer, in blunt speech, is that the Negro race, as a race, has not earned equality. And as I have attempted to argue earlier, it is a feeble and evasive response to accuse the white critic, in making that flat statement, of emulating the child who shot his parents and then pleaded for mercy as an orphan. The failure of the Negro race, as a race, to achieve equality cannot be blamed wholly on white oppression. This is the excuse, the crutch, the piteous and finally pathetic defense of Negrophiles unable or willing to face reality. In other times and other places, sturdy, creative, and self-reliant minorities have carved out their own destiny; they have compelled acceptance on their own merit; they have demonstrated those qualities of leadership and resourcefulness and disciplined ambition that in the end cannot ever be denied. But the Negro race, as a race, has done none of this.

The white South's argument against the civil-rights movement always had at least three elements: in addition to the racial one that Kilpatrick was making, there was the idea that the movement was a Trojan horse filled with Communists and other radicals who wanted to change society wholesale, and there was opposition to the use of federal power to overturn local customs. You almost never see sentiments like Kirkpatrick's in print anymore, and the radical left no longer presents a plausible danger, but hostility toward the federal government is a far more important element in American conservatism today than it was during the civil-rights movement. At a time when the movement begins to seem safe, neutral, and inarguable, it's worth recalling that coercive federal power really was crucial to its success. The civil-rights revolution reëstablished the principle that the federal government would, after nearly a century's retreat, again assume responsibility for enforcing the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments in the South. In Congress, the bitterest fights about civil-rights legislation were always over the question of federal enforcement power, which, for the South, was the most objectionable aspect. The 1957 Civil Rights Act is relatively little remembered because the enforcement provisions were stripped out before Congress passed it; the 1964 act and the 1965 Voting Rights Act were landmarks, and finally made the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments real in the South, precisely because they provided for federal enforcement. Federal troops were present at one milestone event after another during the movement's heyday—indeed, their arrival *was* the milestone. You have to wonder how, in a country that has become far more suspicious of the federal government, they'd be received today.

The glory days of the civil-rights movement came to an end in the summer of 1965. On August 6, 1965, President Lyndon Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act, which signalled the progression of black Southerners from an oppressed caste to an interest group; on August 11th, in Los Angeles, the Watts riot—vividly and terrifyingly described in several pieces in "Reporting Civil Rights"—broke out. The riot lasted most of a week and left thirty-four people dead, in addition to destroying much of a large black neighborhood and much of white America's store of racial good will. After Watts, the bulk of the material in "Reporting Civil Rights" is a dispiriting succession of riots, murders (including King's), unsuccessful campaigns, renunciations of nonviolence, factionalism, and black-white fights. (In 1966, John Lewis, the firebrand of the March on Washington, was ousted from SNCC for being too moderate.) But the summer of 1965 wasn't so obvious a turning point within the movement at the time as it now appears to have been, and the anthology makes it clear why not. Nearly everything about the movement was improvised and almost accidental. The two shimmering peaks of King's career were the 1963 March on Washington and the 1965 Selma-to-Montgomery march, which ended in a speech arguably even more dramatic and better than "I have a dream"—the one delivered from the steps of the Alabama state capitol, with a refrain of "How long? Not long." But King had originally planned to skip the Selma-to-Montgomery march; only when the situation escalated did he realize that he had made a mistake and rush to the scene. Given that none of the important organizations in the civil-rights movement thought that its purpose was limited to achieving "civil rights," the movement couldn't declare victory after the Voting Rights Act and go home; instead, for all its successes, it had to endure the pain of failure, a sense of what had not yet been achieved.

Even now, it would be a mistake to think that civil rights belongs to the realm of settled opinion, requiring of us only the kind of easy, post-facto approval that Trent Lott managed to bungle. The Supreme Court is about to hear arguments in a monumental case on affirmative action in university admissions. The institutional defendant is the University of Michigan, but the case is the culmination of a string of conservative anti-affirmative-action activities that began in

1995 with something called the California Civil Rights Initiative, which used King as its patron saint until it became clear that King had actually been a supporter of affirmative action. Although I didn't notice a single reference to affirmative action, pro or con, in the nearly nineteen hundred pages of "Reporting Civil Rights," the Michigan case is really an organic continuation of the events described in these books. Beginning in the forties, at least part of the civil-rights movement devoted itself primarily to demanding more and better jobs for Negroes outside the segregated South. When these efforts were successful, the usual result was proto-affirmative-action policies by state fair-employment commissions, under which the ordinary job qualifications would be set aside so that Negroes could be hired. The spectre of such programs haunted the debate over the 1964 Civil Rights Act, and the act contained an amendment prohibiting them. But, once it became law, the act quickly led to the establishment of federal affirmative-action programs, and no civil-rights organization, across a wide ideological range, seems to have objected.

The movement began with a struggle for political change without the benefit of either votes or public opinion, and it became expert at using the courts and regulatory agencies to get results that lacked popular support. It's doubtful whether a plebiscite would have approved affirmative action in the first place. But history rolls onward: today one can't run for national office as a Democrat without declaring support for affirmative action, as Senator Joseph Lieberman demonstrated when, on being nominated for Vice-President, he renounced his previous doubt; even President Bush has made a point of avoiding a frontal assault on affirmative action—for example, declining to ask the Supreme Court to use the Michigan cases as the occasion simply to ban the use of race in college admissions. Big social issues of this sort are always in contention. "Reporting Civil Rights" is really a chronicle of one long season in America's ongoing political battles over race. A major legacy of the civil-rights movement is that those battles are far less intense and destructive now than they were during the period covered in the anthology. But they are by no means over. ♦

BRIEFLY NOTED

The Inquisitors' Manual, *by António Lobo Antunes, translated from the Portuguese by Richard Zenith (Grove; $25).* "We forget everything, we forget everything forever and ever," an old soldier declares about the nearly four decades when Portugal languished under the regime of António de Oliveira Salazar. But no one can, and "The Inquisitors' Manual" is a swirl of narratives and perspectives revolving around the family of a powerful, eccentric oligarch in Salazar's government. These orbits are wide: not only ministers but veterinarians, housekeepers, and social workers all have their say. Lobo Antunes, one of the most skillful psychological portraitists writing anywhere, renders the turpitude of an entire society through an impasto of intensely individual voices. Unable to filter present from past, dialogue from echo, his multiple narrators bring us with them as they eddy through the dark backwaters of a lost half-century.

On a Grander Scale: The Outstanding Life of Sir Christopher Wren, *by Lisa Jardine (HarperCollins; $34.95).* This engrossing biography charts Wren's trajectory from mathematical prodigy who invented transparent beehives and a copying machine to England's greatest architect, who rebuilt much of London—most famously St. Paul's Cathedral—after the Great Fire of 1666. Wren later claimed to regard all enterprises involving stone and mortar as "rubbish," and was prouder of his work as an astronomer and anatomist. His extraordinary versatility and industry give Jardine the opportunity to examine the political and scientific constellations of Restoration England. Such is her feel for the subject that, when she sees a long-forgotten basement room directly underneath Wren's Monument to the Great Fire, she immediately realizes that it is a laboratory—that the building was designed not only as a monument but also as a multipurpose scientific instrument, including "a zenith telescope, with lenses at ground and upper-platform levels."

Wrapped in Rainbows, *by Valerie Boyd (Scribner; $30).* The novelist, folklorist, and playwright Zora Neale Hurston lived a life easily equal to the drama of her best novels. Although her ambitions took her far from the all-black town of Eatonville, Florida, where she grew up, her intellectual and emotional roots remained in its watery environs, where telling tall tales was a way of life. She told a few tall tales herself, especially in her autobiography, "Dust Tracks on a Road." But what can lying about one's age or about how many husbands one had matter in the face of having escaped Eatonville to study at Barnard? Hurston's significance as an anthropologist should not be underestimated. She made her readers see the uniqueness of black American speech by printing it the way it was said. Boyd is too laudatory in her approach, but this is a convincing attempt to make sense of a life that continues to defy categorization.

Starving to Death on $200 Million, *by James Ledbetter (PublicAffairs; $26).* In the year 2000, the *Industry Standard*—the would-be bible of the New Economy—appeared to be one of the most successful magazines in history, with more than seven thousand ad pages and projected revenues of two hundred million dollars. The next year, it went out of business. This self-lacerating postmortem by the magazine's former European editor shows that the *Standard* was doomed by early success. Unbridled optimism led to wild spending, dubious side projects, and an unwillingness to make hard decisions. The *Standard*, then, was just like the dot-coms it wrote about, and so the story of the magazine's failure becomes a parable about the era of the bubble. Ledbetter's account of the backroom negotiations that attended the *Standard's* demise drags in places, but he is adept at capturing both the late-nineties atmosphere of irrational exuberance and the bitter, hung-over feeling that followed.

ON TELEVISION

CROSSING THE BORDER

NBC takes a stab at the crime-family drama.

BY NANCY FRANKLIN

The word for "soprano" is the same in Spanish as it is in Italian, but on TV "The Sopranos" translates as "Kingpin," which is the title of the new NBC miniseries about an affluent Mexican-American family whose illegal and murderous business—trafficking drugs between Mexico and the United States—finances their apparently respectable public life and aspirations. It may be unfair to take the comparisons with HBO's "The Sopranos" too far, but "Kingpin," which starts this week and ends on February 18th, wouldn't exist without that show, which left all the networks kicking themselves for passing on it and scratching their heads as they tried to figure out how to create the kind of show that would generate as much buzz, loyalty, and admiration for its grit, humor, and psychological brilliance without going to extremes that would alienate advertisers.

It's hard to tell from the first two episodes whether "Kingpin" is going to go deep or go camp; whether it will depict the family's tensions in an artful way or in a "Dynasty"-like way. In any case, NBC has put a lot of faith in "Kingpin," which was created by David Mills, the writer and executive producer of HBO's "The Corner," a drama about drug addicts in Baltimore: if the response is good, the network may turn the miniseries into a regular series; a different version of "Kingpin" will air on Bravo next month, with stronger language and more graphic scenes; and it is also being dubbed in Spanish for broadcast on Telemundo, the country's second-largest Spanish-language network, which NBC bought last year. A fair amount of Spanish is spoken on the NBC show, in fact, and not all of it is subtitled—surely a nod, and an unprecedented one on the part of any network, to the fact that Hispanics are now the largest minority in the country.

The series opens in the bright, blinding midday light of northern Mexico, just across the Rio Grande from El Paso, to the sound of a snake's rattle. (It's the sound that tells Lassie that Timmy's in trouble.) Miguel Cadena (played by Yancey Arias) is talking to the governor on the construction site of a hospital that he has donated to the community. Handsome, well dressed, and presentable, Miguel is the picture of propriety, and when his raucous cousin Ernesto (Jacob Vargas) arrives on the scene and refuses to shake the governor's hand, Miguel insists that he do so, because "the things you do, they reflect on your whole family." He's a class act, but the money that makes his generosity possible comes from the dark side, and in a series of quick shots soon after the opening scene—like the old film shorts that took you through a factory assembly line in order to illustrate the vigor of American industry—we see dozens of boxes of drugs being loaded onto a truck, the truck speeding down the highway, and then, on the other side of the border, boxes of cash being packed and stacked. "Kingpin" shares its sun-bleached opening shot with the movie "Traffic," but, while "Traffic" depicted the full extent of the drug trade and its trickle-down damage to users, "Kingpin" has, so far, confined itself to the cross-border trade—that dangerous but tempting river of drugs and money—and the complications of competition.

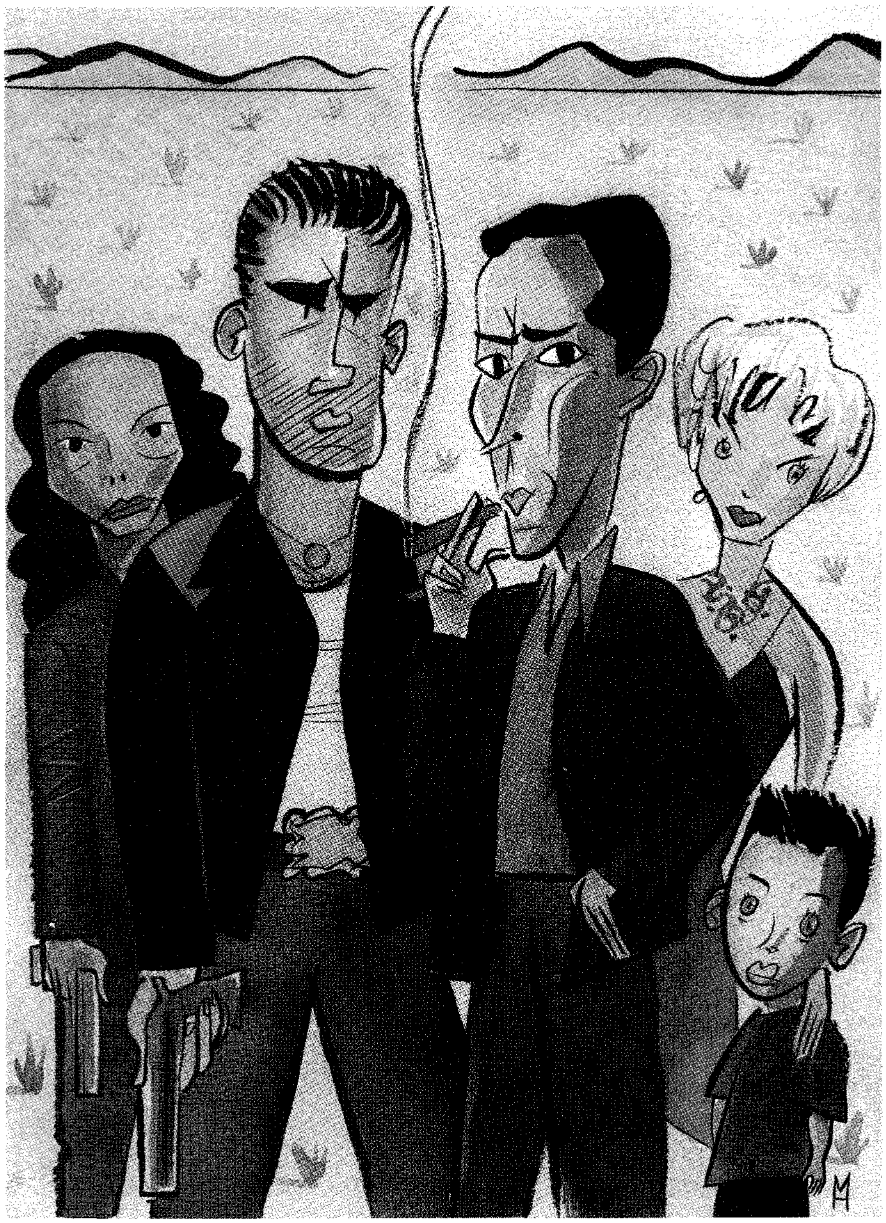
Competition, both inside and outside the family, is at the center of "Kingpin." Miguel, it turns out, is the would-be kingpin—the family is nominally controlled by his uncle, who is under indictment in three states and is in limbo on a boat beyond the reach of the law, being looked after by Chato (Bobby Cannavale), Miguel's brother. Most of the men in "Kingpin," including Chato, have faces that run the very narrow gamut from weather-beaten to grizzled; one man's face has crevices so deep that you could hide quarters in them. Miguel's face, however, is smooth and unlined—it is a face meant to signify both that he is educated and that he has become Americanized and holds himself above the rest of his family. (Chato wears Brando muscle shirts; Miguel wears tailored suits.) Naturally, he is viewed with some suspicion and envy by his relatives—as is his wife, Marlene (Sheryl Lee), who is American and blond and a lawyer. Miguel's rival at the beginning of the series is Ernesto, a belligerent hothead in a leopard-print shirt who is almost a parody of a Bond villain. Miguel, visiting Ernesto at his garishly luxurious mansion, has to calm him down by reminding him, "We're not murderers, Ernesto. We're businessmen." Ernesto is so furious at being told to rein himself in that he stomps off, saying, "I'm going to go pet my tiger." The drama is over the top sometimes, but the direction of the pilot, by Allen Coulter, who has also directed many episodes of "The Sopranos," is stylish—Ernesto walks away trailing a whip carelessly behind him, scattering hundred-dollar bills that he has thrown down in a fit. Somehow this shot lets you know that he's done for. It's much more effective than the scene, later in the episode, when Ernesto and Miguel are talking business and Ernesto is wearing a face mask on the back of his head, so that the tiger won't think he has turned his back and attack him. Ernesto says, pointedly, "I know he loves me, but I also know that he's waiting for his chance to jump on me and eat me."

Miguel is supposed to be tortured by, or at least bothered by, his double life—his loyalties are torn between the family business and his own family. (That's why he takes a box of Benjamins to the local priest.) He's outraged when a middleman shows up in his driveway with a dead body in the back of an S.U.V. while his eight-year-old son is in the house. And yet, when Ernesto tosses a human leg to his tiger to snack on, Miguel shows virtually no reaction—he's wearing a face mask on the *front* of his head. But from this point on—goaded by his ambitious wife—he is ruthless in his efforts to gain control of the business. Sheryl Lee (who was Laura Palmer in "Twin Peaks") is good as Marlene, though there is some-

MARCELLUS HALL

times a Sharon Stone-like hardness and lack of mystery to her character; she's a little too cool under pressure. In one scene, Miguel meets with a Mexican general who is trying to squeeze him for more payoff money; in order to show Miguel that he's a real man, the general takes down his pants. Marlene, who happens upon this unusual display, appears not to be the least bit surprised—she stands there and stares the general down. (On NBC, you don't see the general's genitals, but perhaps Bravo will show the whole enchilada.)

In the first two episodes of "Kingpin," we never get out of the insular world of the drug cartel; if the show can expand its horizons, it may amount to more than a miniseries. (Two of the best "Sopranos" episodes had to do with Tony and Carmela's efforts to get their daughter into college.) As it is, although the dialogue is somewhat cartoonish—a Drug Enforcement Administration agent who survived a shooting and returned to her job told her protesting father, "Daddy, D.E.A. is what I am, not what I do"—the plot is good and thick. And the scene in which the agent, Delia Flores (Angela Alvarado Rosa), is almost killed captures the combustibility of the atmosphere; you didn't see it coming, and neither did she. After being shot, she lies half in and half out of a car trunk; the man responsible for her wounding makes a move as if to pull her out and save her, but her position is too awkward, and he's pressed for time, and without thinking twice he swings her legs into the trunk and closes the lid. It's a horribly eloquent moment, and it manages to say in a vivid way what is always said about this particular stretch of the border: life is cheap.



A D.E.A. agent takes on the Cadena family in "Kingpin."

Going up against "Kingpin" on Sunday nights on ABC is the new incarnation of "Dragnet." I'm not sure whether I like "Dragnet" for what it is or for what it isn't: it doesn't have ten Los Angeles police officers locked in a cell together for two weeks with a hidden camera trained on them; it doesn't involve Crips and Bloods voting each other out of their gangs and then weeping, saying, "It's the hardest decision I've ever had to make"; no axe murderers go to tropical islands and try to hook up with someone from their high-school graduating class; the radio dispatcher doesn't audition for a shot at a record contract; and Sergeant Joe Friday's parents don't pick out the ideal date for him. It's pretty much a straight-up-and-down remake of the previous incarnations of the show starring Jack Webb. This time, the doughy Ed O'Neill plays Friday (he replaced Danny Huston, who was fired after shooting one episode last fall), and Ethan Embry (of the movie "Sweet Home Alabama") plays his partner, Frank Smith. Dick Wolf, who brought the show out of mothballs, has said, "It's not your father's 'Dragnet.'" Well, maybe not, but despite its techno update of the original theme song (a nice touch, and funny, somehow) it is your uncle's or your older brother's "Dragnet," and that's O.K. It's a low-key, literate police drama, using real crimes as a basis for its story lines, and, as in the old versions of the show, Friday does voice-overs to tell you what he's thinking. Sometimes he's loquacious: "Eddie had given up; he just didn't know it. The scene was churning over and over in his mind. He wished hard that the clock could be turned back, that things done could be undone. His wishing for that would undo him." Sometimes he's laconic: "Mulholland Drive at night. The best view in L.A. Unless you're dead." You know how the daily *Times* crossword puzzle gets harder as the week goes by? "Dragnet" is like the Wednesday puzzle: you can finish it and feel satisfied, and yet it's not so simple that it insults your intelligence. ◆

ON PHOTOGRAPHY

FACES IN THE CROWD

August Sander's Germans.

BY ANTHONY LANE

How do you book your place in an August Sander photograph? Well, it helps to be German, and to have lived in the first half of the twentieth century. You should be a farmer, perhaps, with a rutted face and a wrinkled coat, heading off to church along a dirt road in the Westerwald, the region outside Cologne, sometime around 1925. That is how Sander sees you, and that is how he wants you to remain: full length in the frame, from the hazy air above your top hat to the shine on your toe caps. He likes the way you cock your hand against your hip, like the handle of a cup; neither fey nor jaunty, but as though you were propping yourself up. After all, he has already noticed the fatigue in the grooves around your mouth and the skin that sags over the far corners of your eyes. As so often with Sander, there is next to nothing behind you—a gray blur of farm buildings, the track winding away, but little to distract us from the sense that all we need, in order to get the fullest measure of you, is you.

Sander was born in 1876 and lived until 1964; he came to photography in the early eighteen-nineties and stayed with it to his death. By any standards, the years in which he flourished were some of the most traumatic imaginable, and yet he remains among the least traumatized of modern artists. No blood is spilled in his pictures; none of the people would even dream of removing their clothes; no activity is so sudden or spasmodic that it threatens the sharpness of the image, which is recorded on a glass plate whose shortest side is at least a foot long. This is not to say that Sander was one of those molluscoid figures who crouch in their shells, refining their fantasies within; on the contrary, he never lost faith in what could be yielded by a close inspection of his countrymen, and the only person who escapes a full inquiry is Sander himself. There is a self-portrait from 1925—entitled "Photographer," nothing else—and he seems, with his wing collar, his receding hair, and his air of pointed kindness, to be a man whom you would like to know. He looks more like your bank manager, or your dentist, than the man who can grant you the immortality of art. But his character is hard to discern amid the vast, typically well-ordered archive of his work. He is a cipher, and he contains multitudes.

A fine selection from that throng can now be seen in San Francisco, at the Museum of Modern Art. The exhibit, which runs until February 23rd, consists of more than two hundred photographs. Some will be recognized even by those who go blank at the name Sander. His famous "Pastry Cook," for instance, taken in 1928, has been widely reproduced, but it looks all the more edible in its original gelatin-silver print. Round as a bun, topped with a head like a shining cherry, the master of his craft stands firm and square on the tiles of his kitchen, one hand clasping the inch-thick handle of a spoon or whisk, the other curled around the handle of a large mixing bowl, whose curves are a perfect match for the swell of his paunch. There is not an ounce of mockery in the mixture, and the pastry-maker himself would consider the portrait fair, perhaps ennobling; yet the picture is lightly, irrefutably spiced with a pinch of the comic. In that balancing of the aesthetic scales, Sander has no equal.

The cook takes his place in a section of the exhibit entitled "The Skilled Tradesman." You might say, without fear of condescension, that he knows his place, and that, thanks to the durability of his skills, he has few complaints about it. That may strike you as a reactionary view, but Sander was no reactionary; he was an exemplary realist who happened to find himself in a society whose deep-core conservatism—emotional, domestic, civic—survived all manner of political upheaval, and which survives to this day. (See the recent debate in Berlin on the vexed question of whether stores should be legally permitted to stay open beyond four o'clock on a Saturday afternoon or at any time on Sunday. You can just imagine the shoppers, grimly disapproving of their new liberties, posing for Sander on the sidewalk.) "The Skilled Tradesman" is one of seven categories, as dry as hock, into which the San Francisco show is divided. The others are, in order, "The Farmer," "The Woman," "Classes and Professions," "The Artists," "The City," and, by way of a mysterious finale, "The Last People."

These titles are neither arbitrary nor new. It was Sander himself who arranged forty-five portfolios of his work, each containing a dozen portraits, into seven groups, as if to rival the seven ages of man. If you want to comprehend the reach of that ambition, you can buy the exhaustive, seven-volume catalogue (Abrams; $195) that accompanies the exhibit. Behind all these busy gatherings lay a grand plan, conceived as early as 1911. "People of the Twentieth Century" was the label that Sander gave to his project—an enterprise that few photographers have had the nerve, let alone the stamina, to attempt, and that was not confounded even by the loss of some thirty thousand negatives in a house fire in 1946. He called his magnum opus not a social history but a "physiognomic image of an age," founded on a desire to classify "all the characteristics of the universally human." This makes him sound like the loftiest of Victorian scientists, collecting men and women as if he were pinning butterflies to a board, and I recommend that you turn as soon as possible to the photographs themselves. Once you yield to the rhythm of their observational power, the slight chill of Sander's encyclopedic scruples falls away, and you are left not with types but with *this* publisher, *that* coal carrier, the withered bouquets so unexpectedly held by those nurses, and the boundless mustaches of this unmistakable policeman, which unfurl outward like steam from the funnel of a train.

What was the physiognomy of Sander's age? He was born not long after Germany itself, which scarcely existed as a modern state until it was unified by Bismarck, in 1871, and, when

Opposite: "Middle-Class Children" (1925). Few photographers have attempted a project as ambitious as Sander's portfolios.

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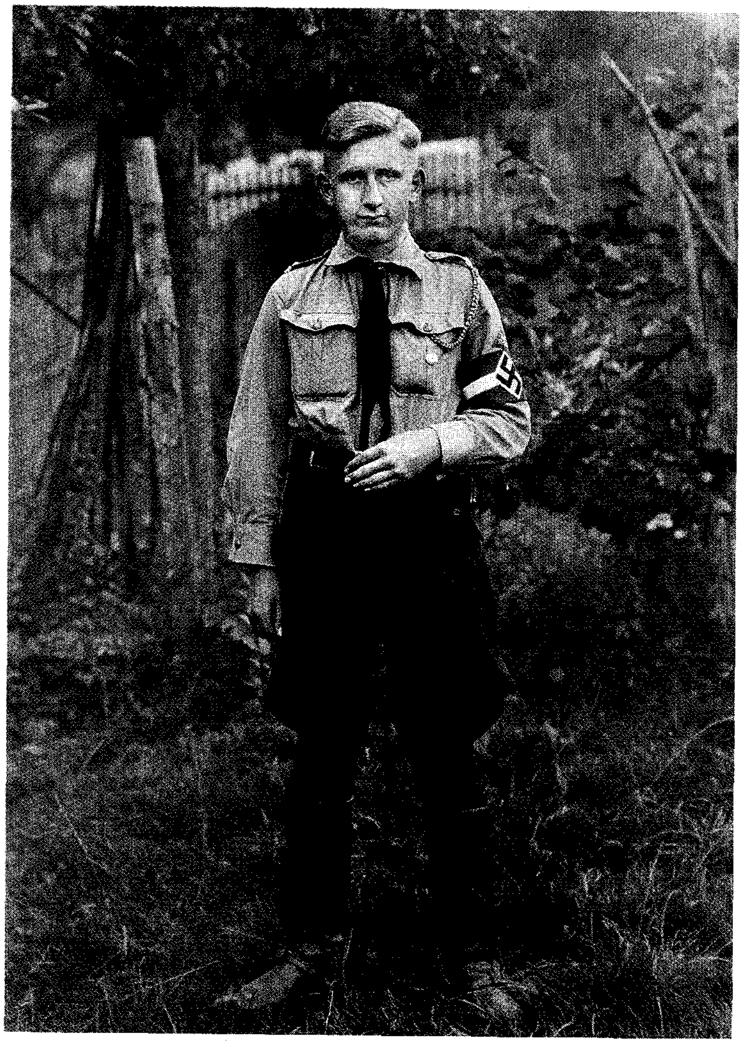
one surveys the innumerable stances and expressions of its citizens, as caught by Sander, one senses, time and again, the half-thwarted urge toward cohesion. Even when he photographs vagrants, or avowed revolutionaries, he finds a stillness in their energy; where a romantic would rhapsodize, and where the satirist would see straight through, Sander grants dignity to the nomad and the anarchist alike—not just a social dignity, either, but the basic dignity that comes of cleaving to your purpose. That is why he doesn't like to trap his fellow-Germans on the wing, or to creep up on them unnoticed, like a thief or a cat; he allows them to pose, head on to the camera, and thus to offer a considered rendition of themselves in their natural habitat—the smithy, the drawing room, the back yard, and the bare wall. This sense of belonging, or, at least, of the need to belong, burns beneath the surface of the photographs, and it may account for the curious lack of bewilderment that his subjects betray in their moment of isolation before the lens. One thinks of the American historian William Sheridan Allen, who, for the purposes of his book "The Nazi Seizure of Power" (1965), studied a single Hanoverian town as it had been constituted in the nineteen-thirties, and discovered that in a population of fewer than ten thousand there were a hundred and sixty-one clubs and societies—one for every sixty people. It is just this kind of community that Sander sought to scrutinize, and the political implications were duly noted by Walter Benjamin in his "Short History of Photography" (1931). "You might come from the right or the left, but you will have to get used to being seen for where you come from, just as you will have to grow used to seeing others for their provenance," he wrote.



"Member of the Hitler Youth" (c. 1941).

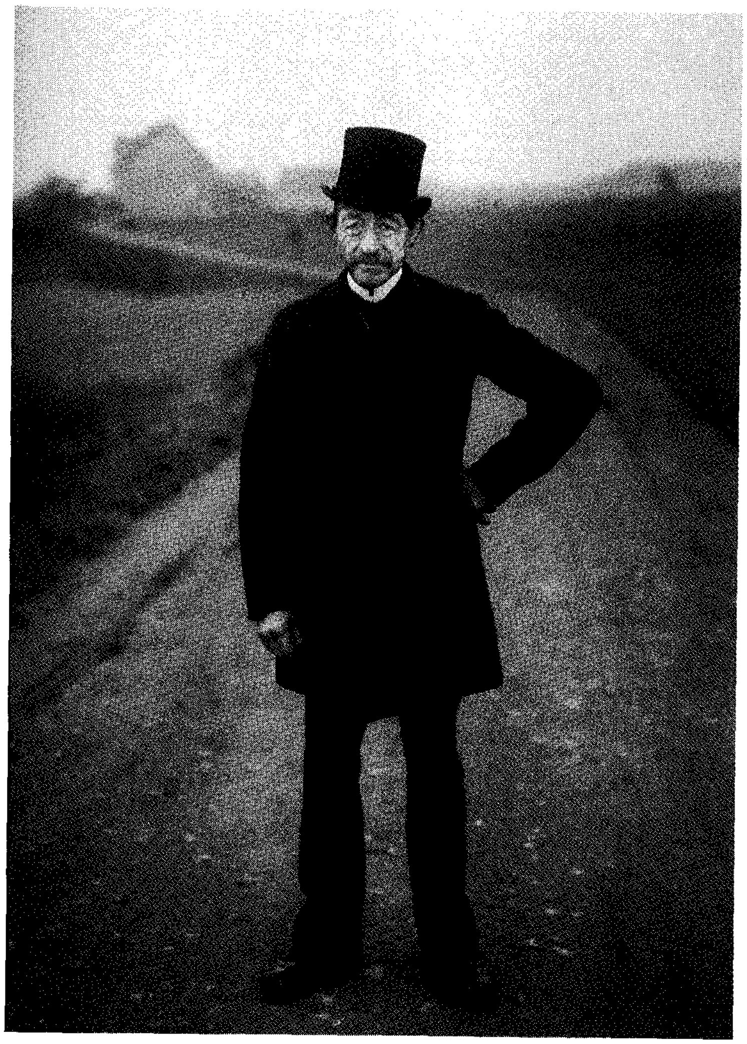
To take one example: just look at the teachers. They seem more substantial, in their way, than any of the men of God whom Sander so impartially inspects, or any of the industrialists, as plump and sleek as seals. And this, in turn, ties in with the exalted status that the teacher had enjoyed in the national reckoning since the middle of the nineteenth century. Gordon A. Craig, who distilled a lifetime's study into "The Germans" (1982), points out that, even during the student disturbances of the nineteen-sixties and seventies, the public sided heavily with the college authorities: "The German people have always had an inordinate respect for their professors—opinion polls in the fifties and sixties regularly showed them as being more admired than bishops, ministers of state, general directors of business concerns, military commanders, and other dignitaries." His list reads like an index to a volume of Sander, and it suggests that, in this matter at least, little had changed in half a century. And so we get the languid, fine-boned gentleman in morning coat and striped trousers, who could easily be a British Parliamentarian on the make, but whom Sander identifies merely as "Teacher." Another man stands on a woodland road with a hunting dog at his feet, a lit cigar between his fingers, and a nonchalant disdain in his eye. "Village Schoolteacher," the title reads, and one instinctively fears for his cowering pupils.

Sander himself was socially mobile, more so than the majority of his sitters. He was the son of a mining carpenter from the Westerwald, but his career took him into other spheres—more artistic ones, though not necessarily more rarefied, for we are taught by his art not to rate one vocation higher than the next. He did two years of military service, starting in 1897, and was later conscripted into the territorial reserves for the First World War. In 1902, he married Anna Seitenmacher; they had two sons, Erich and Gunther, and then, in 1911, Anna gave birth to twins, Sigrid and Helmut. Sander took a photograph of her, entitled "My Wife in Joy and Sorrow." She holds the twin babies, one cradled in each arm. A sleeping Sigrid looks healthy and primed for life; Helmut, swathed in the same lace, is skeletal and open-mouthed, like an aging pauper. He died hours after the picture was taken, and, even though it is included in the San Francisco show, you will not be able to look at it for long.

The image is unusual, because, although Sander never swerved from suffering, he preferred not to register it at first hand but to arrive much later and take a reading of the aftershocks. His portrait of a widower, from 1914, is the saddest photograph that I know; the tubby, balding stalwart of the bourgeoisie, whom in other circumstances we might describe as comfortable, seems utterly comfortless as he clutches his two sons and gazes off-camera—a rare instance of a Sander subject unable, in his quiet extremity of feeling, to meet the photographer's eye. The boys, deprived of their mother, are gaunt and stooping in their long shorts and striped shirts; their hair is cropped to the skull, and, in a terrible whisper of a million widowings to come, they remind you—there is no getting away from it—of the inmates of a labor camp.

But then Sander seemed to have an effortless understanding of children. Whether the death of Helmut left him with a rawness that he was unable to soothe we cannot tell. What is certain is that he got down to the level of the young and treated them seriously, knowing that there is nothing so serious as the rules by which children choose to govern their play. Of the pair shown here, holding hands, all we know for sure is that, as Sander tells us, they were *Bürgerkinder*, middle-class children. What else can one say?

> The little folk look like each other, with the strong undefined likeness of brother and sister. . . . Not only is Snapper the sturdier and more compact, he appears consciously to emphasize his four-year-old masculinity in speech, manner, and carriage, lifting his shoulders and letting the little arms hang down quite like a young American athlete. . . . But all this masculinity is the result of effort rather than natively his. Born and brought up in these desolate, distracted times, he has been endowed by them with an unstable and hypersensitive nervous system and suffers greatly under life's disharmonies. He is prone to sudden anger and outbursts of bitter tears, stamping his feet at every trifle; for this reason he is his mother's special nursling and care. His round, round eyes are chestnut brown and already inclined to squint, so that he will need glasses in the near future. . . .
>
> Her eyes are now golden-brown, set far apart and with sweet gleams in them—such a clear and lovely look! . . . When she laughs, dimples come in her cheeks and she shows her teeth like loosely strung pearls. So far she has lost but one tooth, which her father gently twisted out with his handkerchief after it had grown very wobbly. During this small operation she paled and trembled very much.


"Farmer on His Way to Church" (c. 1925).

The words come from "Disorder and Early Sorrow," a short story by Thomas Mann. Like Sander's photograph, it dates from 1925. What is uncanny is not just the physical detail that is common to image and text but, so to speak, the pitch of extrasensory perception. Both Sander and Mann have the spectral gift of looking at a face and seeing a secret history: the anxieties that lie behind (the pulling of that tooth), and the landscape of fretfulness and waste that may stretch ahead. You worry, instantly, for these children, and it is not sentimental to gain consolation from the tight lock of their hands. As with the churchgoing farmer in his top hat, you are struck by the daunting realization that to look at a Sander is not merely to consult a social record of his times, however thorough that may be, still less to be charmed or amused. The experience is more like entering into a novel.

With the *Bürgerkinder*, the apprehension deepens because, to some extent, we know how the story goes. When we stare at the boy, especially, we cannot restrain ourselves from asking, Where will he be in twenty years? Heaven or hell? And, if the latter, will it be the hell of the living or of the dead? Or will he somehow escape the horrors, become a village schoolteacher, and sit out the wrecking of his homeland? In short, Sander is as central to our grasp of the Weimar Republic, and hence of the Nazis' climb to power, as any of its more notorious documentarians. As his friend Alfred Döblin—the author of "Berlin Alexanderplatz," the great pessimistic novel of the era—wrote of Sander's work in 1929, "The tensions of our time become clear when we compare the photograph of the working students with that of the professor and his so peaceful family, nestling contentedly and still unsuspecting." That last phrase is like ice.

Sander was a friend of the painter Otto Dix, and the category of "Artists" in "People of the Twentieth Century," with its portraits of Hindemith, Furtwängler, Strauss, and lesser luminaries, contains more than one image of Dix, both alone and with his wife. Dix might not have painted the portly Dr. Mayer-Hermann (1926) if Sander had not led the way with his own gallery of rotund professionals, and Sander's "Secretary at West German Radio in Cologne" (1931)—she looks a bit fast for polite society, but also too fearful to cut it as a good-time girl—casts an appreciative backward glance at Dix's eel-like Sylvia von Harden (1926), the original social X-ray, coiled up with

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her Martini and monocle. Sander took evident pleasure in the corpulent and the skinny alike, in all the everyday formations and deformations of the body. What he never insisted on was a corresponding deformation of the soul. Take his "Commercial Traveller," of 1930, big and bearish, trussed up in a double-breasted coat. He is as pathetic as he is proud; he is a fat man, but he is not a fat bastard. If he were painted by Dix, however, or, more scabrously still, by George Grosz, he would unequivocally be tagged as one of the damned. The full-bellied merchant, drooling for profit, is as much a stock figure in Grosz's bestiary as the rouged and raddled hooker; what Sander offers is, as it were, the basic, untreated material that Grosz will then inflate and pollute for the purposes of sulfurous lampoon. Confronted with both, I increasingly feel that Sander's art is not only more temperate than Grosz's but morally more difficult to sustain. Anybody can hate, but only a handful can clearly see.

This genius for calm, the refusal to cast judgment even when the stones are being thrown around your head, reached its peak in Sander's work of the nineteen-thirties and forties. He was part of a determined movement—*Neue Sachlichkeit*, or New Objectivity, which held its first exhibition in Mannheim in 1925. Dix and Grosz were both members, and the stated aim was to outgrow, or wipe away, the indulgences of Expressionism, and to restore a figurative clarity to the art of the day. After all, political conditions were now so volatile and livid that simply to get them down on paper or canvas would be expressive enough. Looking back, one could claim that the ideals of New Objectivity were no more than a reforging, under pressure, of the Old Objectivity, the rage for representation that had driven so much German art since the time of Dürer. Indeed, I kept thinking of Sander as I visited a recent show of Dürer's graphic art at the British Museum, which gave off an almost terrifying sanity. There is not a flicker of mawkishness in Dürer's portrait of an infant boy, and no yielding to malice when he turns to a friend of notable hoggishness. For Dürer, in the late fifteenth century, draftsmanship brings its own morality, and for Sander, at the start of the twentieth, the camera imposes an equal burden of justice. Admittedly, he could do nothing with the young Aryan from Hitler's S.S. bodyguard whom he photographed around 1940, and who gazes mistily offstage like a Wagnerian baritone posing for a publicity still. He, however, is Sander's only monster. The rest of his kind are all too human.

This is not to defuse or deny the strength of Sander's private opinions. In 1929, he published a selection of sixty photographs under the title "Face of Our Time." In 1936, the National Socialists seized the book and destroyed the photographic plates. They could not countenance a man whose art lavished such care on Gypsies, black circus performers, and the mentally disabled. The state was gearing up to kill such people, and this man Sander was daring to give them fresh imaginative life. Worse still, he had a troublesome son. In 1934, Erich Sander, a student member of the Socialist Workers' Party, had been arrested, charged with anti-Nazi activities, and jailed for ten years. He died in prison in March, 1944, before the end of his sentence. Yet the extraordinary fact remains that, throughout that decade of separation, his father continued to photograph individual members of the organization that had inflicted such a lasting wound on his family. From our perspective, that may sound tasteless or indifferent, but, as Sander wrote to friends in the New Year of 1940, "Have the courage to think for yourself." So look at his parade of Nazis. Look at all the variations on the bored, the quizzical, the puny, and the porcine, sometimes coexisting within a single frame. Look at the sample of Hitler Youth shown on these pages, standing in the long grass of his garden. He loves his jackboots, but he can't be bothered to iron the collar of his shirt. His hair could have been combed by his mother for school. He knows what to do with his right arm, when the occasion demands, but when a photographer comes he doesn't have a clue what to do with his left. And where, exactly, is his chin? The whole photograph adds up to a riveting depiction of human weakness: a meagre spirit, scarcely believing its luck, clutching at its unexpected chance to play the part of the strong, and knowing

WORDS

Where do words come from?
From what rubbing of sounds are they born
on what flint do they light their wicks
what winds brought them into our mouths

Their past is the rustling of stifled silences
the trumpeting of molten elements
the grunting of stagnant waters

Sometimes
they grip each other with a cry
expand into lamentations
become mist on the windows of dead houses
crystallize into chips of grief on dead lips
attach themselves to a fallen star
dig their hole in nothingness
breathe out strayed souls

Words are rocky tears
the keys to the first doors
they grumble in caverns
lend their ruckus to storms
their silence to bread that's ovened alive

—*Vénus Khoury-Ghata*
(Translated, from the French, by Marilyn Hacker)

that for once it will not be found out, for all the other hopefuls will be sharing the stage.

The final volume of "People of the Twentieth Century" marks an exquisite coda to Sander's achievement. Here he photographs the blind, and those ravaged by worse misfortunes. He photographs those whom he calls midgets, which is not what we would call them, but the outcome is infinitely sober and respectful. Diane Arbus is often cited as an inheritor of Sander's legacy, but by his standards she seems too eager to seek people out for their oddity, whereas that is the one thing that Sander does not care about and, indeed, barely appears to notice. Last, he photographs the dead: a death mask of his son Erich, and then, unforgettably, two elderly Germans at peace. We see a bearded man, and a woman in a neat lace cap, and then we see the title of both pictures: "Matter." I missed a beat when I first read that, thinking, Is that all? Is Sander so rigorous in his disillusion as to suggest that, when our trade is finished, when we have ceased to be pastry-makers, bricklayers, barons, mothers, S.S. officers, high-school girls, and cellists, we dwindle to nothing more than matter, as chimney sweepers come to dust? On reflection, the opposite is true. If Sander devoted himself to the collating of human variety, and to the minute annotation of quirks, it is because of his faith in *Geist*, in the animating force of spirit and thought. That is what allows us to distinguish not just the pastry-maker from the Nazi but one Nazi from the next. Matter will fade, like a photograph, but *Geist* will endure and be remembered, in fascination, fear, or love. For photographers, August Sander's tender but exacting work is about as good as it gets. He happened to be born in Germany, but one feels that he could have mapped any number of civilizations. If only he could have lugged his camera, bellows and all, back to the courts of Caligula or Louis XIV, or, with rather less fuss, set up shop at Plymouth Rock and photographed the new arrivals. In fact, we could use him now. ♦

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THE THEATRE

A TALE FOR ALL SEASONS

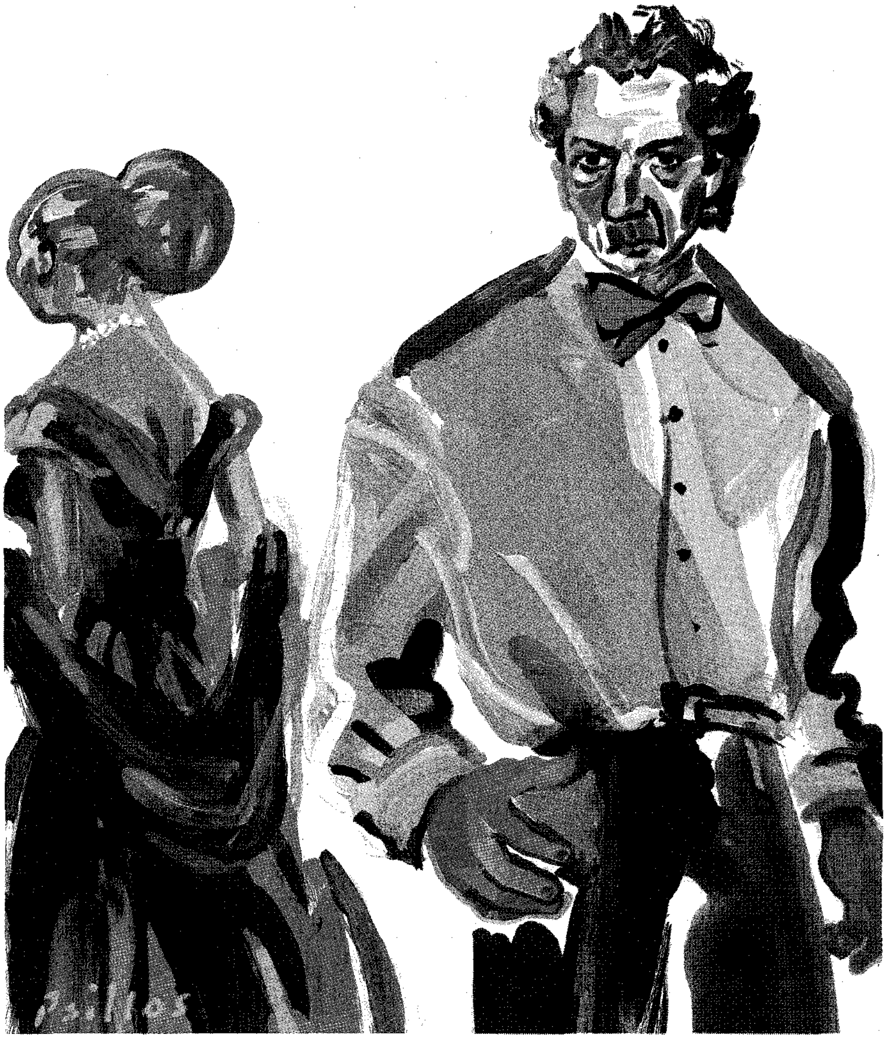
Adventures in casting at the Classic Stage Company.

BY HILTON ALS

On April 29, 1968, "Hair" ("The American Tribal Love-Rock Musical") opened on Broadway. In those faraway days, when a show tended to reflect something of the Zeitgeist and not, as more often happens now, our love of nostalgia, "Hair" was a happening—not only for its popularization of the hippie myth but also for its multiracial staging. The casting of black actors with white marked a new attitude in the theatre, one that was not self-consciously "liberal" but, rather, urban and culturally diverse; it played off the inevitable tensions and surprises that arise among actors when their differences are given a stage. "Hair" had its start downtown, at the Public Theatre, where the founder and director, Joseph Papp, had instituted what one might call the New York school of casting. At the Public and at the Delacorte Theatre, in Central Park, where Papp staged Shakespeare under the stars, the poor and the rich watched Raul Julia and Clifton Davis mugging their way through "Two Gentlemen of Verona"; the unforgettable Gloria Foster starred in Ntozake Shange's translation of Brecht's "Mother Courage"; and David Alan Grier, the black actor and comedian, performed with sly wit in "The Merry Wives of Windsor." For Papp, there was nothing to be gained from restricting blackness to the same old song-and-dance routine. How could one create theatre—a living theatre—in a city where Jews and blacks, Puerto Ricans and Chinese, Indians and Native Americans had lived on top of one another for decades, without acknowledging the different characters of its inhabitants? Of course, black singers and actors had been appearing for years in opera (Leontyne Price in "Turandot," in 1959, for instance) and on television (Cicely Tyson in the 1963 series "East Side, West Side"). But, watching those performances, one was often aware that the casting was intended as a "breakthrough," a step forward in the dreary politics of civil liberties. Papp helped make the multiracial cast feel natural to the enterprise, thereby establishing a tradition that such brilliant New York-based directors as George Wolfe, the late Reza Abdoh, and Jo-Anne Akalaitis continued.

Barry Edelstein, the director of a new production of "The Winter's Tale" (at the Classic Stage Company, where he is also the artistic director), has cast Shakespeare's play with a number of black and Asian actors. But Edelstein here exhibits none of Papp's *Macher* pride or subtlety. He has Teagle F. Bougere, for instance, play the wily Autolycus—the singing rogue who opens the second half of the show—first as a street guy and then as a fast-talking Rastafarian, to disastrous effect. Bougere's "blackness," rather than Autolycus' cunning, becomes the joke, and it's an offensive one: Stepin Fetchit meets Redd Foxx. Angel Desai, an Asian actress, is relegated to two small parts, used more for her sprightly gameness than for what one guesses is real talent—a Madame Butterfly without the tears.

Autolycus first appears, in Act IV, in Bohemia, where Perdita (Elizabeth Reaser) and Florizel (Gene Farber), the son of the King, Polixenes (Michel Gill), are living in a kind of Elizabethan version of "Hair"—an Eden for the young. But this Eden was established *after* a fall. At the beginning of the play, sixteen years earlier, Polixenes loses his dearest friend, Leontes (David Strathairn), the King of Sicilia, by seeming to be too close to the King's wife, Hermione (Barbara Garrick). One afternoon, at Hermione's insistence, Polixenes describes his youthful friendship with her husband:



Barbara Garrick and David Strathairn in "The Winter's Tale."

We were as twinn'd lambs that did frisk i' th' sun
And bleat the one at th' other. What we chang'd
Was innocence for innocence; we knew not
The doctrine of ill-doing nor dream'd
That any did.

Leontes, unfortunately, has no such illusions about innocence. As he watches Polixenes and Hermione talk, he is consumed by jealousy ("Too hot, too hot"). He is Othello without the intellection, which is to say, without Iago. He's filled with rage, but he doesn't know where to focus it—on Hermione, for loving his "twin," or on Polixenes, for loving his wife. Hermione and Polixenes are Leontes' loves and thus his hatred, too; they are the two halves of himself. As Terry Eagleton points out in his fascinating and maddening 1986 study "William Shakespeare," much of "The Winter's Tale" is about polarities, and it is here that the playwright first reconciles culture with nature. In a fury, Leontes sends Hermione to prison, where she gives birth to a girl, Perdita, who, naturally (or naturally enough for a Shakespearean plot), later falls in love with Polixenes' son. Leontes' thirst for revenge is a force of nature; it is also born of social convention, which, "The Winter's Tale" makes clear, is necessary to the survival of the species. None of us want to recognize the beast in ourselves, the charmer with the knife.

Sadly, Edelstein is no better at directing the white actors than the colored. Barbara Garrick is a competent performer—a less funky Beverly D'Angelo—but here she is inexplicably languid. Hermione, despite her skills as a hostess, is an inept mother, too involved with a sort of sadness she cannot name. Although she encourages her son, Prince Mamillius (the otherworldly Michael Reid), to tell stories, she is dominated by her own need to be heard. She wants to be adored but cannot find the language to express her desire. Garrick fails to convey this, and her behavior around Mamillius makes Hermione's banishment seem entirely appropriate: she's a fake and a drag. Is Edelstein trying to make a heavy-handed comment about the idle neurasthenic rich here?

Garrick lacks physical presence—save for her too obvious stage pregnancy, which bounces in front of her like a volleyball—and this means that Strathairn, as Leontes, has nothing to play against. With his melancholy eyes, olive skin, and graying hair, Strathairn has the face for tragedy. You could see that in his performance in the Sigourney Weaver vehicle "A Map of the World." He knows how to be still, how to let someone else's emotions wash over him. But as Leontes he has too many words and not enough silence. He takes command of the stage, but he doesn't quite fill it. He's too self-contained and romantic—too much a gentleman—for such a big messy part, and the murderous inclinations he has to embody are a poor match for his controlled sensitivity.

Edelstein has set the play in the present day, but he makes little use of the context. The minimal staging—a toy piano, a work light, a curtain, among other sketchy props—is serviceable, but the actors look uncomfortable with the empty space between them and the audience. It swallows them up. All, that is, except Mary Lou Rosato. As Paulina, a courtier's wife, who protects Hermione and admonishes Leontes for his cruelty, Rosato, too, is a force of nature. She is determined to be noticed, sometimes to unintentionally comic effect—she's too broad by half. When the other actors speak, you can actually *see* her listening. She arches her eyebrows. She flings her hennaed hair. She's right out of "Stage Door," the old actress-coming-of-age story, in which a ukulele-playing Ginger Rogers interrupts another girl with "Oh, you're interfering with my art."

The family reunion, at the conclusion of the play, is the only real moment of depth in this production. As Leontes, Hermione, and Perdita realize that they will indeed form a family, the embarrassed silence that descends is touching because it is untheatrical. Reaser, as the flower child Perdita, brings an appealing authenticity to the scene. Rather than straining to perform, she listens and reacts to the other characters. With her translucent skin, red hair, and dancer's form, she draws the audience in without distracting it. She's a lady, and she's a star. She even manages to share the stage with Bougere gracefully. Reaser manages, too, to bring a spark of clarity to the play, which is often difficult to follow. Without a director who can illuminate the baffling world these characters inhabit, Shakespeare's dense poem about nature and civilization, men and women, innocence and jealousy feels like Technicolor converted to black-and-white. ♦

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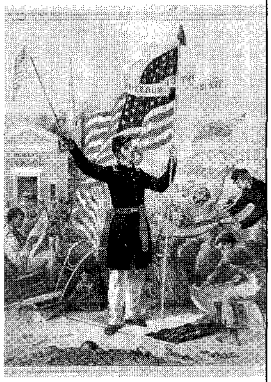

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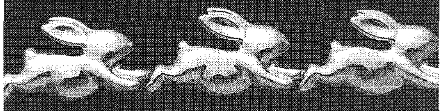

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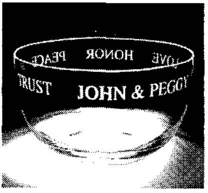

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THE CURRENT CINEMA

FAST TIMES

Is America finally ready for Fassbinder?

BY DAVID DENBY

Rainer Werner Fassbinder, who died twenty years ago, was not an easy man to interview. Sometime in the late seventies, I sat with my back to a pink damask wall in one of the public rooms of the Algonquin Hotel while Fassbinder, dressed in his uniform of frayed white shirt, black leather jacket, and jeans, paced and darted in front of me. Then in his early thirties, he was pale and soft, with a patchy brown beard and mustache and matted hair, and he was smoking furiously. At one point, he lunged at me, arm outstretched, and I flinched. It turned out that he was reaching for a pack of cigarettes on a ledge behind my head. He lit a new cigarette with the one he was finishing, and went on talking, and we both pretended not to notice that for an instant a critic believed that a director was about to punch him out.

Fassbinder rarely stopped moving and slept very little; he frequently kept people off balance as a way of getting them to do what he wanted. Since he wasn't always sure what he wanted, working for him or living with him was a nerve-shattering but often irresistible experience (two of his discarded male lovers committed suicide; others stayed close to him for years). Negligently raised—he liked to say that he had no childhood and had become his own father—and haphazardly educated, he grew up despising the rituals of bourgeois German family life, which, he was convinced, were a mask for greed and contempt. Once he became a success, he turned his unloving mother into an actress, renamed her Lilo Pempeit—thereby reversing the parent-child relationship—and kept her around on the set, where he could control her. His real family was the troupe of actors, designers, technicians, lovers, and hangers-on he worked with. He had mesmerizing talents for instant invention and for leadership that bordered on the sadistic. He gave actors what they most wanted—emotional attention—but he sometimes gave it in the form of abuse, driving them to rage or exhaustion, where he thought the truth of personality lay.

When Fassbinder was only twenty-two, he "imposed himself" (in the words of his biographer, Ronald Hayman) on a group of young actors who had known one another at drama school in Munich. There followed an explosion of theatrical and filmmaking activity almost without parallel. Fassbinder wrote, acted in, and staged plays, then he turned some of them into movies and made other movies by reworking episodes from his life or by adapting German literary or stage classics. Many of the films were shot in three or four weeks, with minimal preparation, and as soon as one film had been shot the next project was launched. In 1970 alone he made seven feature-length films. In 1980, he completed the fifteen-hour adaptation of Alfred Döblin's "Berlin Alexanderplatz," for German television, and several other films. Constantly working, Fassbinder acquired few possessions, not even a home. He drank heavily, and snorted as much as three grams of cocaine a day. Near the end, gaining weight rapidly, he had the appearance, in his soft hat and shades, of a hipster walrus.

As the movies came out here, they were greeted with unrestrained enthusiasm by the late Vincent Canby, of the *Times*, and by a few other critics, but many people found them off-putting and strange. Pauline Kael, for instance, called "The Merchant of Four Seasons"

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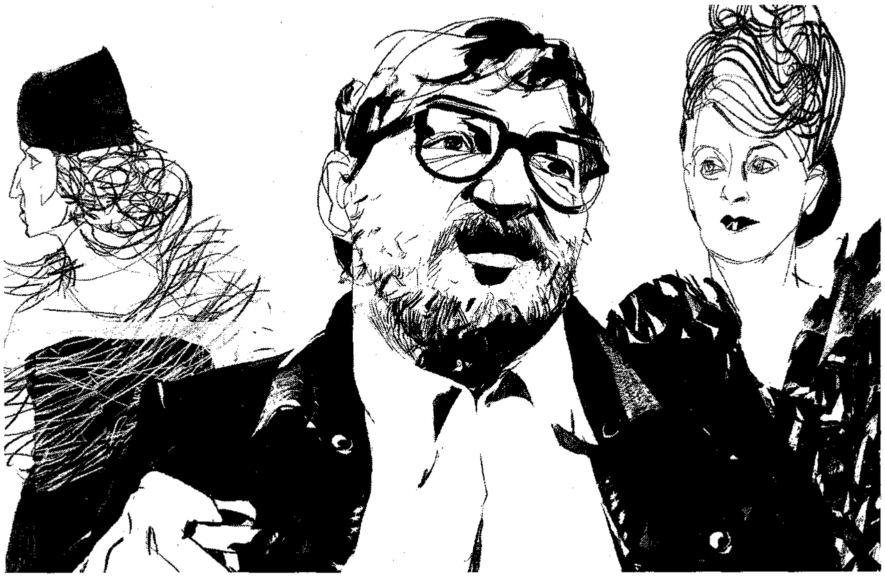
(1971) "an art thing, all right, but perhaps not a work of art." Except for "The Marriage of Maria Braun" (1978), which played for a year in a theatre near Lincoln Center, none of the films reached beyond art-house and campus audiences, and after Fassbinder's death his American followers, with what appeared to be a collective sigh of relief, seemed to forget him. For many moviegoers under forty he is now no more than a name. Can he be revived? The independent distributor Wellspring (formerly Winstar) is taking a chance. It has gathered together sixteen of his films for a festival beginning on February 14th at Film Forum and then moving on to Los Angeles, Boston, San Francisco, and other major cities; a number of the films have also been issued on DVD. If a Fassbinder revival is ever to happen, this is the moment.



Fassbinder films will appear in a travelling retrospective and on DVD.

RICCARDO VECCHIO

Yet the strangeness of his work remains as daunting as ever. The 1971 "Beware of a Holy Whore" gives a good idea of Fassbinder's early style and also a taste of what it must have been like on his sets. Like Godard's "Contempt," Truffaut's "Day for Night," and Fellini's "8½," this is a movie about the making of a movie, or, rather, the non-making of a movie. A bickering cast and crew, stranded without money at a Spanish resort, fall into dereliction and sloth. As the camera glides through the lobby of the hotel, quarrelsome, morose people pass in and out of the frame, and dirty things take place on a couch in the corner; the gathering atmosphere of gossip and disloyalty leads to shrieking fits, slaps, shattered glass. The actor Lou Castel, in a parody of Fassbinder's tantrums (Fassbinder himself appears as a production assistant), dominates everyone, then complains that his victims are too dependent on him. "Holy Whore," a cross between Brecht and Warhol, is clearly comedy, and Fassbinder's alternating between torpor and tirade seems an intentionally disjointed style. But "The Merchant of Four Seasons," which uses the same style, is anything but a comedy. The movie is about Hans, the black sheep of a bourgeois family who tries to make a go of it in Munich as a fruit-and-vegetable peddler, only to be betrayed by everyone close to him, including his greedy wife. He withdraws from them all and drinks himself to death. At first, it seems a sombre Marxist narrative—the hero, we think, is meant to be the victim of a merciless class-conscious society in which the better equipped instinctively gang up on the weak, as in some vicious schoolyard game. But Fassbinder's style is anti-realistic and vaguely mocking. The lighting is bright and shadowless, the performers hold silent poses for long, excruciating periods, and then burst out in violent harangues, delivered with the peculiar, throat-scraping harshness of German spoken in anger. Is the movie camp? Not quite; the suffering of the hero is genuine. A hybrid, then—a Marxist fable crossed with the superheated emotionalism of a fifties Hollywood melodrama.

For years, Fassbinder mixed realism and artifice in ways that were unprecedented and provocative. "The Bitter Tears of Petra von Kant" (1972) is a kind of haute-couture lesbian pajama party with silken, knowing dialogue. In the flat of a well-known dress designer, erotic power passes back and forth between two women (Margit Carstensen and Hanna Schygulla), who are dressed to the teeth but never go out—mostly they lounge on a big bed under a Baroque painting of writhing nudes. The movie's rhythms are slow and graceful, the imagery often ravishing (like many of Fassbinder's early films, "Petra" was shot by the great Michael Ballhaus), but on that bed emotional murder is committed. For Fassbinder, all love relationships become a struggle for power in which the partner who loves more loses more. Three years later, he presented that fatalistic scheme in a male companion piece, "Fox and His Friends," in which he plays a street hustler who becomes the victim of elegant upper-middle-class swine. By then, he had rejected the peculiarities of his stop-and-go, fire-and-ice dramaturgy—or outgrown them. In "Fox," the rituals of love and betrayal appear embedded in a recognizable social and psychological world. He stretched even further, into social history, in "The Marriage of Maria Braun," which traces the rise of a mischievous and tough-souled young woman (Schygulla again) in the postwar years. This movie and "Berlin Alexanderplatz" suggest a new, settled mastery and (of all things) maturity.

Even if we had mixed feelings about Fassbinder's movies when they came out, many of us nevertheless got caught up in the heedless momentum of his career. His productivity embodied the dream of cinema as an organic activity. You ate, drank, fought, made love, and made movies. Chaplin worked this way during his time with Mack Sennett. Godard did it in the sixties, and so did Bergman. Woody Allen has come closest to this pace in recent years, but Fassbinder was the wild-man champ of organic filmmaking. In 1982, when he was preparing to shoot his forty-second movie, he died during the night of a drug overdose, a cigarette between his lips. He was staying in a borrowed flat in Munich. He was thirty-seven years old. ♦

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   Domestic help _____ Vineyards _____ Interior design _____ Plastic surgery _____
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SECTION II (mark Agree or Disagree)

1. Eliminating dividend taxes will aid the environment by speeding conversion of underutilized land to golf courses. _____
2. People who earn less than $250,000 per year smell funny. _____
3. The very rich are different from you, but not from me. _____
4. I don't have a job, either, but you don't hear me complaining about it. _____
5. With real-estate taxes what they are today, the homeless don't appreciate just how lucky they are. _____

SECTION III

Federal regulations require that you complete a Means Test. Under penalty of being refused admittance to the members-only dinner at the 2003 Masters golf tournament at Augusta National, you must check off at least one blank below:

I am: rich _____ very rich _____ very, very rich _____ Saudi-Arabian rich _____

SECTION IV

If your personal assets, including dividends, total more than $50 million, complete the following:

1. Source of income: Grandfather _____ Father _____ Mother _____ Ex-spouse _____ Oil _____
2. There are too many __________ in the Hamptons these days.
3. Yes / Yes, indeed (circle one): It takes a gutsy President to back tax cuts that alienate 97% of all Americans.
4. Yes / Yes, indeed (circle one): That's my kind of President!

SECTION V

Which statement would you most prefer to see carved over the entrance of the U.S. Treasury Department building?

1. "The proof of a truly advanced civilization is how often it distributes even more money to those who already have most of it." —*Anon.* _____
2. "When your economy is kind of ooching along, it's important to let people have more of their own money." —*George W. Bush* _____
3. "A heavy tax burden motivates those in the lower-income brackets to work harder, and this strengthens our nation's economy."—*Joe Billionaire* _____

SECTION VI

What do you regard as the best result of the upcoming tax cut for the rich and superrich?

Skyrocketing national debt _____ More $$$ for Texas _____ Bigger G.O.P. war chest _____
Cutbacks in services to the poor _____ More fun for my family _____ Class war _____

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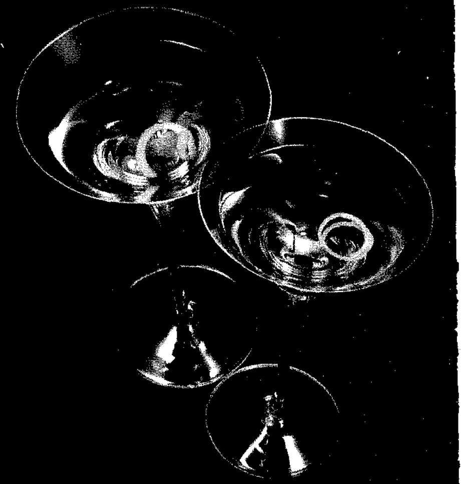
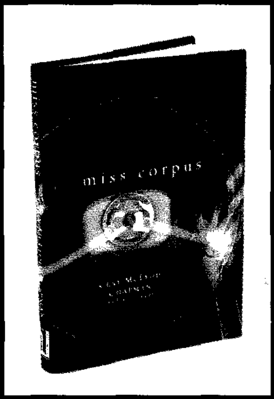


Author Focus: Clay McLeod Chapman, 25, is the author of "Rest Area," a short story collection he began writing while a student at Sarah Lawrence College. "Miss Corpus," published by Hyperion, is his first novel. A native of Richmond, Virginia, Chapman now lives in Park Slope, Brooklyn.

Christopher Smith



Buckle your seatbelt and lock the car doors; Clay Chapman's about to take you for a hair-raising ride in "Miss Corpus," a story of love and horror that careens along I-95 from Virginia to Florida.

Chapman, who's been part of New York's Lower East Side performance-art scene for more than six years with his "Pumpkin Pie Show," brings his words to life in readings. Lead performer and author of the show, Chapman structures his appearances to feature one of his character monologues backed by a live Hohner Claviola soundtrack. Working with an ensemble of actors and musicians, he spins twisted tales of large tragedies in small lives.

Chapters in "Miss Corpus" also take the form of mini narratives (even I- 95 has her say), exposing us to the inner angst of both a bereaved husband and a father who's suffered an even more wrenching loss. The incantatory story, a carbon-monoxide-infused nightmare, puts these two on a collision course after they hit the road with their departed loved ones.

"It is gruesome and grotesque," allows Chapman, who's been compared to a post-punk Stephen King. "But if readers get to the heart of it, it's a redemptive book about two people who missed their opportunity to fulfill a kind of love—and have a deep need to continue something that fate hadn't allowed them to. The love was so strong, given the fabric of reality that was ripped apart, they keep going no matter how unhinged they become."

Inspired as much by horror films as by authors such as Katherine "Geek Love" Dunn, Chapman admires the genre: "The great thing about horror films is the capability to express every deep-rooted emotion all within the scope of one movie or book. Horror allows you to run the gamut of emotions—love, fear, pain, good, and evil—within a tight, concise structure. It's more exciting, and that really interests me."

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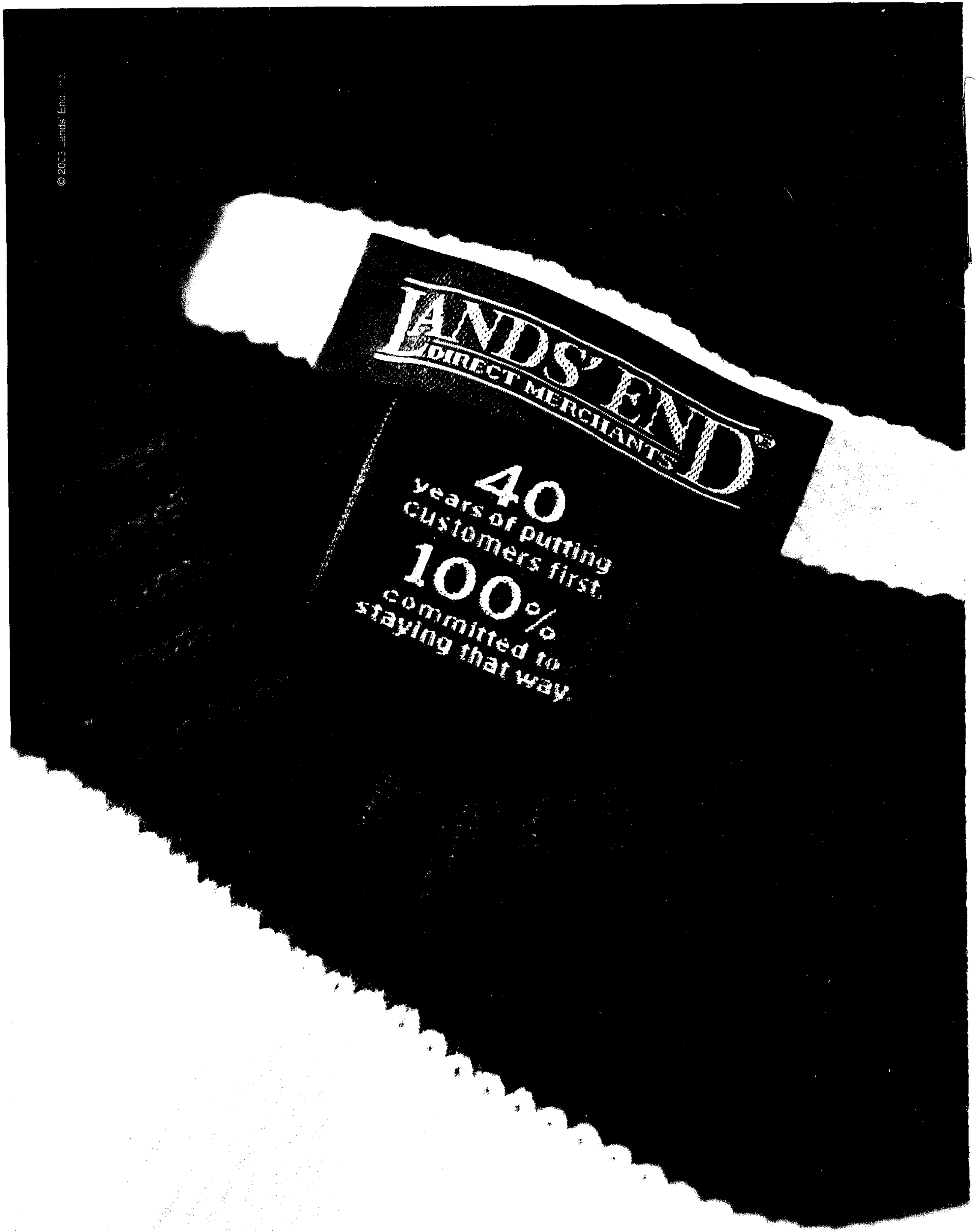
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